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Milton's bust

JOHN MILTON

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SELECT
PROSE WORKS
OF
MILTON.

ACCOUNT OF HIS OWN STUDIES.
APOLOGY FOR HIS EARLY LIFE AND WRITINGS
TRACTATE ON EDUCATION
AREOPAGITICA.
TENURE OF KINGS.

VOL. I.

WITH
A Preliminary Discourse and Notes,
BY
J. A. ST. JOHN.

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PRELIMINARY

D I S C O U R S E.

' There is much reason for regretting that the "Prose Work" of Milton, where, in the midst of much that is coarse and intemperate, passages of such redeeming beauty occur, should be in the hands of so few readers, considering the advantages which might be derived to our literature from the study of their original and nervous eloquence."

Dr. SUMNER, Bishop of Winchester

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

1. IT is not my intention to introduce the present Discourse by a biographical memoir, though I am far from supposing that a new Life of Milton would, even now, be a work of supererogation. But where the matter is so rich and extensive, it would be of little service to present the public with a fresh outline of facts already known ; and to descend into the marrow of the subject, and discuss the various questions of criticism and politics necessarily connected with it, would certainly demand a separate volume. I shall therefore, in the present instance, depart from the plan intended to be generally pursued in these prefatory disquisitions, and enter at once upon the remarks suggested by an attentive examination of the character and writings of Milton.

2. Yet I may, perhaps, without blame, express in this place the regret which the disparaging tone adopted in speaking of their predecessors by too many of the biographers of this great writer, has never failed to cause in me. From their language it would frequently appear, that each considered the other almost in the light of impertinent

intruders, whom it must therefore be his business severely to chastise; whereas a little reflection might have sufficed to beget the very different persuasion—that the whole subject being too large for the grasp of any one of them, they might all in their way contribute to extend the fame and utility of him whom they all profess to admire. For my own part, I have always felt that whosoever aimed, even though awkwardly and imperfectly, to wreath a fresh garland for this great and illustrious name, thereby conferred on me a personal obligation, which, though not individually intended, is, in fact, the case; since all have done something towards increasing the influence of one whose influence is that of virtue, and opened a clearer insight into the moral nature and heroic sentiments of a man, in the brightness and continuance of whose fame every Englishman is interested.

3. However this may be, few of those who have hitherto undertaken to set forth in order the events of Milton's life, appear to have entered into the spirit, or comprehended the importance of his prose writings. Like him who climbs a lofty mountain, and is so eager to reach the summit that he neglects or despises the many magnificent prospects which, would he pause a moment, he might enjoy by the way, they hurry forwards to the *Paradise Lost*, trampling, in their indecent haste, upon his *Apology for his Early Life and Writings*—his *Areopagitica*—his *Eikonoklastes*,—his *Defence of the People of England*; though, viewed separately, each of

these be a work whereon an author might build rational hopes of immortality. Reasons, good or bad, might no doubt be assigned for this proceeding; but whatever they may be, the result has proved highly injurious to Milton's reputation, and, still more, to our literature.

4. One of his recent biographers, who must, therefore, make but slight account of his prose writings, even goes so far as to lament he should ever have interrupted his commerce with the muses to engage in the struggle of polities. He looks upon the poet as something too airy and dream-fed to feel any interest in the affairs of mankind; as something which should, perhaps, subsist upon patronage, celebrate the praises of kings, and abandon the study of civil wisdom to inferior persons; which was doubtless the notion Plato entertained of poets, when he banished them his commonwealth as advocates of tyranny. But Milton, nurtured from the cradle in noble sentiments, had formed a very different idea of the man who is inspired by the muse; knowing that from him to whom much is given much will be required: and that to none has a larger or more comprehensive intellect been vouchsafed, than to whom we dignify with the illustrious name of Poet, who should, therefore, stand second to none in advancing the cause of freedom.

5. Nothing, in fact, can be more unwise than to desire that pure and lofty minds should keep themselves aloof from the world and the world's business; for if our object in congregating to-

gether in society be to render each other happy—not to seek our own happiness at the expense of whomsoever may stand in our way—then they who are endued with intellectual and moral qualities superior to the generality, should, above all things, strive to infuse into publick affairs as much as possible of their own spirit; since in this way only can governments be converted into any thing better than associations of the powerful to enslave the weak. Poets should never forget they are men and citizens. On the contrary, in their peacefulest and most retired moments, the love of humanity should be with them, to direct the lightnings of their genius against the oppressors of mankind. Consider the prophets, a kindred race: do they not constantly exhibit the strongest sympathy for the feeble, the friendless, the obnoxious to injury? Are not their voices lifted up for the people, against those who would grind the faces of the poor, and subsist, in pride and luxury, on the sweat of other men's brows? The poetaster, with a base admiration of every thing superior to his own mean soul, may celebrate and approve the excesses of men in authority; of all, in fact, who have any thing to give: but the poet, whose lips the seraphim have touched with fire snatched from the altar, will never mistake for greatness the mere possession of the trappings of state, or confound regal pomp with genuine grandeur, which can have no existence independently of virtue.

6. The spirit of poetry is a spirit of power, which, in him who is possessed by it, cannot fail

to engender a consciousness of dignity. He feels that he bears within him mines richer than those of gold or diamonds, which, so soon as art shall supply the proper tools for working them, must place him among the peers of intellect, or, rather, prove his title to a kingdom in the realms of thought, by subduing into praise and admiration whole masses of those whom fortune may have blindly thrust before him. And therefore the true poet scorns to be a parasite, scorns to owe any thing to insolent wealth ; or, if distress and lack of virtue sometimes lead such a man to prostitute his divine gift, rather than eat the sweeter bread of indigence, and herd with his misfortunes in a cottage or a garret, we may be well assured that he abhors whom he lauds, and burns to give birth to the vituperation and satire which he feels struggling to leap forth from his brain, and strangle his ill-paid eulogies. Nature never designed the muses to be the hand-maids of despotism ; nor can their servant, without betraying his high trust, touch the lyre they have placed in his hands for any but who practise virtue.

7. Milton, as he ought, experienced that noble pride and enthusiasm which the consciousness of genius inspires. He could, therefore, not behold without abhorrence an order of things in which the accidental possessor of wealth, or place, or a title, assumed the air of a superior, or of a master ; while he acknowledged no master but God, no controlling power but the law, which, when just, is God's minister. He never forgot that man was created

in the image of God ; that, by putting on the human form, Christ had raised and sanctified it ; and, therefore, that whoever sought to debase and vilify human nature—and what can do this more effectually than oppression ?—was, in fact, the enemy of God and Christ, and to be opposed accordingly.

8. Such were the considerations which led Milton to engraft the politician on the poet, and caused him to employ all the energies of his gifted mind in effecting the overthrow of a government fatal to the interests of society, and in which civil precedence was obtained on other grounds than virtue and public services. He saw not, nor is it very clear what useful or worthy purpose could be served by considering the religious, the learned, the able, inferior in the scale of society to court-sycophants, or the routine intermeddlers with polities. His indignation was roused at beholding the tranquillity of three kingdoms disturbed by the perverse ambition of one man ; and, afterwards, when the contest was terminated, by the insolence of a hired sophist, who, for a paltry bribe, brandished his mercenary tropes and figures against the People of England, overwhelming with contumely our illustrious countrymen, whom the poet justly considered the most pious, faithful, and valiant nation in Christendom. In the government of the church, also, he discovered principles analogous to those operating in the state, and tending to the same end ; and against these, in like manner, he conceived it to be his duty to lift up his voice. Such, I repeat, were the reasons

that snatched Milton from the muse's bower, to convert him into a controversialist and a politician, and nobler sources of inspiration no man ever found.

9. But upon the notion that they who would effectively exercise the poetical faculty should hide themselves in sullen seclusion from all active or political pursuits, I may, perhaps, be permitted, by the way, to hazard another observation. The idea seems to have arisen from the practice of ordinary verse-makers in comparatively refined ages, whose timid sensibilities unfit them to shine or struggle among the throng. Pope, indeed, says,

“ To grottos and to groves we run,
To ease and silence, every muse’s son : ”

that is, whoever feels his mind big with great thoughts, and reflections, and imagery, which trace their origin to his commerce with experience, desires, when he would give birth to them, some calm and tranquil retreat, where he may compose himself, and for the time be free from contention and solicitude. But a wholly retired and contemplative life, is fatal to poetry of every kind. For even he who would bring before us a picture, that shall delight and interest, of the inanimate world, must pour over it traditions, legends, superstitions, connecting it with man; in other words, must clothe it with human sympathies. For, after all, landscapes are only valuable as a background to human action: they are nothing in themselves. And the utter inability of mere brute matter to call

forth the energies of poetry, is evident from the writings of those *doctores umbratrici* who in every age have wooed the muse; their representations, like nothing in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, being but so many wild dreams, and their sentiments and language every way worthy of the matter. None have ever yet benefited by setting at nought the wisdom which pronounced it not good for man to be alone; and we exhibit a disposition to approach this unblissful state, when, snapping in twain the link which binds, and should bind us, religiously and politically to human society, we skulk like wolves or wild dogs, to some den of our own making, to gnaw the bones of our pitiful fancies in secret.

10. Whoever loves mankind will love to be among them; and poetry, above all things, is impregnated with love. No fear that the great poet should ever lose, in courts, or camps, or senates, or crowded cities, the spirit which makes him what he is. It constitutes the very essence of his nature. He cannot lose it. Over whatever he does it will cast a glory that shall dignify the meanest duties, and inspire a soul into actions deemed by the dull and commonplace incapable of elevation. Epaminondas was a poet, when he said he would render illustrious the humble office contemptuously appointed him by his countrymen: and every one whose mind contains the seeds of this divine fire, passes uncontaminated through the world—in it, but not of it—finding in every situation, but chiefly where the brethren of his race are most nume-

rous, “ books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing.” In fact, I never could understand how he who professes to represent human passions and human manners,—which are the great staple of poetry,—should hope to qualify himself for the task by escaping, as far as possible, from human society. And what is there in vast assemblies of men—what, in those momentous transactions of peace and war—in seditions, in tumults, in the fierce and uncouth struggles for freedom, which nations long injured and oppressed, make at length, when their burdens have become intolerable ;—what is there in all this, I say, that can scare the Epic or the Tragic Muse, whose business it is to describe such phases of humanity? Throughout the *Paradise Lost*, as well as throughout the *Iliad*,—which, as far as can be conjectured, was likewise composed immediately after a great political crisis—the irruption of the Dorians into Peloponnesus, and the consequent migrations of the Ionic inhabitants to Asia Minor,—evident traces are discoverable of the times of trouble and commotion in which its author vaticinated : an irrepressible love of independence, a mind thrown by an unexampled political catastrophe into that condition, in which its most hidden and secret powers, like the fountains of the great deep, were broken up, and fiercely agitated, and impelled, as by a hurricane, to pour all their dazzling and tumultuous waters into the broad channel of poetry. Such circumstances, indeed, are not inspiration, or they would operate on every breast alike ; but

over minds fitly disposed, they sweep as over a lyre, calling forth divinest music.

11. The affairs of the world, according to the character of him who views them, are either an assemblage of coarse contrivances, intended to enable a certain number of human creatures to eat, and drink, and grow fat at their ease; or they are a set of laws and operations, noble in their nature and tendency, and designed to conduct a being endowed with lofty intellectual faculties towards that high and glorious moral condition, which constitutes, here below, the perfection of his nature, and the ultimate aim of his existence. Now they who conceive as a brute, if it could think, might conceive of public business, may be excused for supposing that a poet should on no account meddle with it; but if, with the wisest of men, we regard politics as the master-science; as the fruitful source to millions of happiness or misery; as the instrument by which nations are plunged into bestial degradation, or elevated to the rank almost of gods; it will then be manifest that the most poetical, or, in other words, the most energetic and creative minds, should eagerly engage in the great concerns of the public.

12. With such views, it will be evident that my desire is not to disparage an art to which,—if the avowal may here be made,—I have been from my youth upward devoted: but, could it be proved that poetry necessarily indisposes men towards freedom, inculcating a slavish abandonment of our rights to be trampled on by the first tyrannical

foot that might itch to tread on them, it were far better that a millstone were tied about every poet's neck, and that he were cast into the sea. For, what true relish can there be in the life which is held, not enjoyed, by the permission of another? Who, under an evil government, can feel any unsophisticated thirst of glory; or be desirous that posterity should know he tasted the bitter cup of servitude under this or that tyrant? Or, worse still, that while myriads of his nobler countrymen were smitten and pining in secret sadness, at beholding the abomination of desolation in the Holy Place of Freedom; or were, perchance, carried forcibly away for imaginary offences into exile beyond the seas, he could tune his slavish lyre for the amusement of courtiers, or insolently celebrate his private pleasures?

13. By such considerations, as I have already observed, was Milton actuated, when, laying aside, for a time, the poetical character, he entered upon the composition of those works of which I am now to give some account. In performing this duty, besides the difficulties which may be inherent in the subject itself, I feel that I shall have to encounter others of a peculiarly stubborn kind. To the public generally, many at least, if not most of his prose writings, for reasons hereafter to be explained, are scarcely known to exist; and how can they be persuaded that things which have lain so long in obscurity, are not only worth reviving, but distinguished for the most rare eloquence and powers of reasoning? Hazlitt used to say that Coleridge had

a trick of preferring the unknown to the known. Will not this, in certain quarters, be said of me? Not that in this country the number is small of persons far more intimately acquainted than myself with whatever Milton has written; but so much can hardly, perhaps, be said for the great majority of those engaged in the study of English literature, for whom, and not for those already deeply versed in his writings, the present discourse and selection are intended.

14. Another obstacle to the diffusion of Milton's prose works among the present generation is the uncouth titles which several of them bear. The less courageous reader is stopped at the threshhold. He cannot be persuaded that a man who stands at the door of his treatise, quaintly disguised in a muffler of hard words, and brandishing a syllogism in his fist, can intend very gentle or pleasant treatment to those who enter; and, accordingly, passes on to others, who smile and speak him more fair at the outset. Doubtless, too, he has heard from various quarters, hints unfavourable to the character of the author; who, in the language of certain writers, though they acknowledge him to be a great poet, is a fanatical, malignant Commonwealthsman, the advocate of doctrines fatal to the peace of society, of doubtful piety, dishonest in politics, a bad husband, a worse father. His style, too, is said to be scarcely English. The subjects he loved to treat are spoken of as out-of-date topics, from the consideration of which, however handled, no good could now, in the universal blaze of knowledge

that surrounds us, accrue to any man. To the smatterer in literature he is rendered odious by being represented as a monster of pride and overweening self-conceit; who, in proportion as he learned to entertain lofty notions of his own intellectual powers, grew to despise and undervalue those of others, praising penuriously and seldom, because he knew that one good word from his pen was a passport to immortality.

15. Had nature however gifted me with but a tithe of the eloquence which the author of these now obscure works possessed, I should not despair of making good his claim to stand at the head of our prose literature, instead of confining myself, as I must, to maintaining that he deserves to be read; and, that so far from being a harsh and crabbed controversialist or politician, he is an exquisitely sweet and pleasant writer, in whom the most original and uncommon thoughts are clothed with language always manly and proper, and in many cases of surpassing beauty. To those who already appreciate Milton justly, or who may be much better acquainted than I am with all his merits, I can of course have nothing of value to offer, unless they should be pleased to accept for such my humble but earnest admiration of the man, and my resemblance, so far, to themselves: I address myself to the prejudiced, the unconvinced, and those whose course of reading may hitherto not have brought them to the knowledge of those golden treatises, wherein so much wisdom, and eloquence, and true taste, and whatever is most excellent and ad-

mirable in literature, is to be found. And if the volume I now endeavour to recommend to the public should so far answer my hopes, as to direct some slight degree of attention to the vast storehouse whence these pieces have been taken, I shall certainly, in prefacing and commenting them, esteem myself to have been neither unprofitably nor un honourably employed.

16. The spirit of our age has often been described, and sometimes without any design of complimenting it, as the spirit of utility ; and by this I profess, in the present case, to be actuated. Utility is my object : but under this term I include whatever can benefit the life of man, public or private ; whatever can improve his virtues, or enlarge his thoughts, or lift him above the clouds of prejudice, or provide for the innocent entertainment of his leisure. Milton was preeminently an utilitarian. In all he wrote he had a view to the public good ; and, in fact, regarded the promotion of this to the utmost as so much his duty, that, in his contest with the bishops, he urges as his principal motive, the undying reproaches of conscience to which silence and tame submission would have exposed him.

17. Having been himself educated a Puritan, he naturally looked upon episcopacy with an unfriendly eye. Had the spirit of his times been different, this aversion might, perhaps, have remained inactive, or manifested itself in a less fierce and uncompromising manner. He might have spoken or written, indeed, against the abuses of church-go-

vernment; but he would probably have exhibited in his opposition more of courtesy, more of that polished suavity of expression, under which, in ordinary circumstances, men are wont to cloak their hatred. The persecution of his brethren by the prelates, however, was too recent, and the spirit of intolerance still too palpably manifest in the great dignitaries of the church, to permit a man of so zealous and fiery a temperament to enter with coolness into the lists of controversy. He considered his opponents to be men who, under the mask of humility, and love of holiness, concealed a most profane and unchristianlike hankering after political power; who esteemed more their seats in the House of Lords than the efficacy of their ministry in God's vineyard; who, like Laud, would consent, in compliance with the desires of a popish king, to the profanation of the sabbath, in the hope of having their ambition gratified by beholding the order to which they belonged advanced over the heads of the laymen.

18. His first object, therefore, in coming before the public as a prose writer, was to prove that the Church of England still stood in need of reformation, and to explain the causes which had hitherto hindered it. In his peculiarly nervous and masculine eloquence he describes the corruptions of the Gospel introduced by priestly heresiarchs, lamenting "that such a doctrine should, through the grossness and blindness of her professors, and the fraud of deceivable traditions, drag so downwards, as to backslide into the Jewish beggary of

old cast rudiments, and stumble forward another way into the new-vomited paganism of sensual idolatry, attributing purity or impurity to things indifferent, that they might bring the inward acts of the spirit to the outward and customary eye-service of the body, as if they could make God earthly and fleshly, because they could not make themselves heavenly and spiritual. They began to draw down all the divine intercourse betwixt God and the soul ; yea, the very shape of God himself, into an exterior and bodily form, urgently pretending a necessity and obligement of joining the body in a formal reverence, and worship circumscribed. They hallowed it, they fumed it, they sprinkled it, they bedecked it, not in robes of pure innocence, but of pure linen, with other deformed and fantastic dresses, in palls and mitres, gold, and gewgaws fetched from Aaron's old wardrobe, or the Flamen's vestry. Then was the priest set to con his motions and his postures, his liturgies and his lurries, till the soul, by this means of overbodying herself, given up justly to fleshly delights, bated her wing apace downwards ; and, finding the ease she had from her visible and sensuous colleague, the body, in performance of religious duties, her pinions now broken and flagging, shifted off from herself the labour of high soaring any more, forgot her heavenly flight, and left the dull and droiling carcass to plod on in the old road, and drudging trade of outward conformity."

19. He then proceeds to trace the progress of idolatry and superstition, describing with a masterly

hand the various corruptions that sprang up, until “the huge overshadowing train of error had almost swept all the stars out of the firmament of the church,” and spread over the whole Christian world a darkness which seemed to be that of night without a dawn. In the midst of this obscurity, however, the light of the reformation flashed forth; at which, “methinks,” says Milton, “a sovereign and reviving joy must needs rush into the bosom of him that reads or hears, and the sweet odour of the returning Gospel imbathe his soul with the fragrance of heaven! Then was the sacred Bible sought out of the dusty corners where profane falsehood and neglect had thrown it, the schools opened, divine and human learning raked out of the embers of forgotten tongues, the princes and cities trooping apace to the new-erected banners of salvation; the martyrs, with the irresistible might of weakness, shaking the powers of darkness, and scorning the fiery rage of the old red dragon.”

20. The Long Parliament had now commenced its labours, and with a quick, though as yet unpractised eye, Milton already perceived that a way was opening for the establishment of popular institutions. Theoretically he had long been versed in the science of politics, and possessing so much judgment and learning, could not fail to perceive how ordinary statesmen, with their timid and barren brains, misdirect the energies of the people, and convert that government which was designed to promote the good of all, into an instrument for cockering the pride of one family and its creatures. These aristocrats, he

saw, must always prove the unconvertible enemies of reformation ; for, with all their incapacity, they want not the wit to perceive, that so soon as justice and a regard for the public good shall become the directing principles of government, the great business of the nation will be taken out of their hands to be confided to others more worthy.

21. Turning aside, therefore, for a moment, from the pursuit of the bishops, whom throughout his first book he had incessantly worried, he, in his preface to the second, attacks the time-serving politicians, their supporters. "It is a work good and prudent," says he, "to be able to guide one man ; of larger extended virtue to order well one house ; but to govern a nation piously and justly, which only is to say happily, is for a spirit of the greatest size, and divinest mettle. And certainly of no less a mind, nor of less excellence in another way, were they who by writing laid the solid and true foundations of this science, which being of greatest importance to the life of man, yet there is no art that hath been more cankered in her principles, more soiled and slubbered with aphorising pedantry, than the art of policy ; and that most, where a man would think should least be, in Christian commonwealths. They teach not that to govern well, is to train up a nation in true wisdom and virtue, and that which springs from thence,—magnanimity ; (take heed of that;) and that which is our beginning, regeneration, and happiest end,—likeness to God, which, in one word, we call godliness ; and that this is the true flourishing of a land, other

things follow as the shadow does the substance : to teach thus were mere pulpity to them. This is the masterpiece of a modern politician, how to qualify and mould the sufferance of the people to the length of that foot that is to tread on their necks; how rapine may serve itself with the fair and honourable pretences of public good; how the puny law may be brought under the wardship and control of lust and will: in which attempt, if they fall short, then must a superficial colour of reputation by all means, direct or indirect, be gotten to wash over the unsightly bruise of honour. To make men governable in this manner, their precepts mainly tend to break a national spirit and courage, by countenancing open riot, luxury, and ignorance, till having thus disfigured and made men beneath men, as Juno in the fable of Io, they deliver up the poor transformed heifer of the commonwealth to be strung and vexed with the brize and goad of oppression, under the custody of some Argus with a hundred eyes of jealousy. To be plainer, sir, how to solder, how to stop a leak, how to keep the floating carcass of a crazy and diseased monarchy or state, betwixt wind and water, swimming still upon her own dead lees, that now is the deep design of a politician ! Alas, sir ! a commonwealth ought to be but as one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth and stature of an honest man, as big and compact in virtue as in body ; for look what the grounds and causes are of single happiness to one man, the same ye shall find them to a whole state, as Aristotle, both in

his ethics and politics, from the principles of reason, lays down. By consequence, therefore, that which is good and agreeable to monarchy, will appear soonest to be so, by being good and agreeable to the true welfare of every Christian ; and that which can be justly proved hurtful and offensive to every true Christian, will be evinced to be alike hurtful to monarchy : for God forbid that we should separate and distinguish the end and good of a monarch from the end and good of a monarchy, or of that, from Christianity."

22. But, to return to the principal objects of his vituperation in this work, which throughout is filled with great splendour of writing ; how must the Puritans have chuckled over the following picture of the clergy. "The emulation that under the old law was in the king towards the priest, is now so come about in the Gospel, that all the danger is to be feared from the priest to the king. Whilst the priest's office in the law was set out with an exterior lustre of pomp and glory, kings were ambitious to be priests ; now priests, not perceiving the heavenly brightness and inward splendour of their more glorious evangelic ministry, with as great ambition affect to be kings, as in all their courses is easy to be observed. Their eyes ever eminent upon worldly matters, their desires ever thirsting after worldly employments, instead of diligent and fervent study in the Bible, they covet to be expert in canons and decretals, which may enable them to judge and interpose in temporal causes, however pretended ecclesiastical.

Do they not hoard up pelf, seek to be potent in secular strength, in state affairs, in lands, lordships, and domains, to sway and carry all before them in high courts and privy councils, to bring into their grasp the high and principal offices of the kingdom? Have they not been known of late to check the common law, to slight and brave the indiminishable majesty of our highest court, the law-giving and sacred parliament? Do they not plainly labour to exempt churchmen from the magistrate? Yea, so presumptuously as to question and menace officers that represent the king's person, for using their authority against drunken priests?"

23. Yet, he continues, "they intreat us that we would not be weary of those insupportable grievances that our shoulders have hitherto cracked under; they beseech us that we would think them fit to be our justices of peace, our lords, our highest officers of state, though they come furnished with no more experience than they learned between the cook and the manciple, or more profoundly at the college audit, or the regent-house, or, to come to their deepest insight, at their patron's table. They would request us to endure still the rustling of their silken cassocks, and that we would burst our midriffs, rather than laugh to see them under sail in all their lawn and sарcenet,—their shrouds and tackle,—with a geometrical rhomboides upon their heads! They would bear us in hand that we must of duty still appear before them once a year in Jerusalem, like good circumcised males and females, to be taxed by the

poll, to be sconced our head-money, our twopences, in their chandlerly-shop book of Easter. They pray that it would please us to let them hale us, and worry us with their bandogs and pursuivants ; and that it would please the parliament that they may yet have the whipping, fleecing, and flaying of us in their diabolical courts ; to tear the flesh from our bones, and into our wide wounds, instead of balm, to pour in the oil of tartar, vitriol, and mercury. Surely a right-reasonable, innocent, and soft-hearted petition. O, the relenting bowels of the fathers !"

24. From these passages may be discovered how severely the feelings of the Puritans had been exasperated by the persecutions they had endured, and in what light each party beheld the other. However, it is by no means my intention to enter into an analysis of these, or any other of his works, or to introduce specimens of the whole, which, where arguments and beauties lie so thick, would swell this preliminary discourse into volumes. He seems everywhere to maintain his positions fairly, earnestly, and with consummate skill ; though, in many places, there is a manifest want of courtesy, and sometimes perhaps even of Christian charity. But this is more a subject of regret than wonder. The spirit of the times was fierce ; all parties being known to each other more by the interchange of injuries than of brotherly love, or any thing recommended by the gospel. Abuse was constantly mistaken for logic. Among those who were in power, and those who were out, too many secretly

coveted the same things—rank, distinction, wealth ; as the Presbyterians soon made evident when they had succeeded in ousting the prelates.

25. Of all Milton's prose works, none, perhaps, contains passages of greater beauty than his treatises on Divorce. While ostensibly engaged in discussing the question generally, and upon public grounds, he was, it is well known, pleading his own cause. He had married a woman, not wanting, perhaps, in the virtue on which all a woman's peculiar virtues are built, but otherwise worthless ; one to whom company, the false and hollow attentions of gay chamberers, show, glitter, and banqueting, were more pleasing than the society and love of her husband. Too late, indeed, he made the discovery ; when, in one short month after their marriage, the lady became tired of the unriotous tranquillity of his house, and obtained his permission to return to her father's ; where, instead of the modest cheerfulness, the plain repasts, the religious and happy homeliness of a philosophic dwelling, she was surrounded by the brawling soldiers of the king's army, the most dissolute, depraved, and godless crew that ever disturbed the peace of civil society.

26. With the patience and calmness of a good man, hoping to reclaim the partner chance had brought him, he long bore with her perverseness, beseeching her, again and again, to return to her home. His prayers were disregarded, his messengers dismissed with contempt. Upon this he naturally grew angry, and resolved, if reason and ar-

gument would effect it, to obtain legal deliverance from a woman unworthy, as all his biographers agree, ever to have been his wife. At this circumstance of his own history he evidently glances in the "Paradise Lost," where Adam, incensed, and half despairing, reproaches his guilty and now submissive consort with the fatal sin they had shared together:—

"But for thee

I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
And wandering vanity, when least was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdained
Not to be trusted, *longing to be seen*
Even by the Devil himself; him overweening
To overreach, but with the serpent meeting
Fooled and beguiled, by him thou, I by thee,
To trust thee from my side, imagined wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
And understood not all was but a show
Rather than solid virtue, all but a rib
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister, from me drawn,
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
To my just number found. O, why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest heaven
With spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of Nature, and not fill the world at once
With men as angels without feminine,
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? This mischief had not then befallen,
And more that shall befall, innumerable
Disturbances on earth through female snares,
And strait conjunction with this sex. *For either*
He never shall find out fit mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake,
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained

By a far worse ; or if she love, withheld
By parents ; or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already linked and wedlock-bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame :
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound."

Book x. 873—903.

27. In handling this subject, it is easy to see he was personally concerned, so frequently and with such torturing eloquence does he pourtray domestic infelicity. He speaks of the husband, overtoiled with long-continued laborious thought, sitting down lonely by his fire-side, a prey to that melancholy which intellectual exertion commonly leaves behind it, not finding in his wife a fit companion, but rather a cold image of clay, devoid of sympathy, devoid of love. And we see throughout that he had no children upon whom his heart might otherwise have showered its affections. This, the sweetest of human enjoyments, he had not yet known ; for he was childless. And as far as it could be done,—much farther than at first view would be deemed possible,—he has bared, in these works, the secrets of his bosom, and admitted the reader into communion close as that of friend with friend. He has exhibited to all those who know how to regard it, a picture of his soul, for the truth of which every man who attentively reads will be answerable. And he who can rise from the contemplation of this portrait, without intense love and admiration for the great and godlike

spirit it represents, must be cased more completely in stoicism than Zeno himself.

28. Many of the finest passages in his controversial writings, are sometimes spoken of, even by favourable judges, as declamation. But here, at least, he does not declaim. He reasons, and supports his reasoning by so many authorities and examples, fetched from the Scriptures, or from the most unobjectionable authors of ancient and modern times, that he overwhelms and bears down before him all his antagonists, triumphantly establishing the doctrine, that divorce, properly regulated, can be no other than an important blessing to society. Timid and ill-judging persons, however, though convinced of this verity, often hesitate to support it, from the supposition that some truths may prove prejudicial to society; which, though they intend it not, is a most impious and unphilosophical notion, for it supposes God to be in contradiction with himself, to have established laws and relations which it would be destructive to human kind to make known.

29. Milton was wholly incapable of cherishing fancies of this kind. He saw every part of the economy of the universe in harmony with every other part; and even thus early undertook

“To vindicate eternal providence,
And justify the ways of God to man.”

He, therefore, feared not to encounter the obloquy he foresaw would be heaped upon him, for thus

endeavouring, by one bold effort, “to wipe away ten thousand tears out of the life of man,” insisting on the necessity of recovering domestic liberty, and of preceding the reforms of the state by a more important reform in the household laws, which, ill understood, had banished peace and love from the Christian hearth.

30. His ideas of woman must be sought for in this treatise, not in Johnson. Here we find him representing her as man’s best companion, and in the sense most flattering to the sex, as the companion of his intellect, with whom he might well be content, though no other rational creature existed, to spend a life devoted to each other. For St. Augustin, in his commentary on the words,—“And the Lord said, It is not good that man should be alone,”—having contended that, excepting for the continuation of the human race, “manly friendship, in all other regard, had been a more becoming solace for Adam, than to spend so many secret years in an empty world with one woman;” Milton replies: “But our writers deservedly reject this *crabbed opinion*; and defend that there is a peculiar comfort in the married state which no other society affords. No mortal nature can endure either in the actions of religion, or study of wisdom, without sometime slackening the cords of intense thought and labour; which, lest we should think faulty, God himself conceals us not his own recreations before the world was built: ‘I was, saith the Eternal Wisdom, daily his delight, playing always before him.’ And to him indeed wis-

dom is as a high tower of pleasure, but to us a steep hill, and we toiling ever about the bottom : he executes with ease the exploits of his omnipotence, as easy as with us it is to will : but no worthy enterprize can be done by us without continual plodding and wearisomeness to our faint and sensitive abilities. We cannot therefore be always contemplative, or pragmatical abroad, but have need of some delightful intermissions, wherein the enlarged soul may leave off awhile her severe schooling ; and, like a glad youth in wandering vacancy, may keep her holidays to joy and harmless pastime. Which as she cannot well do without company, so in no company so well as where the different sex in most resembling unlikeness, and most unlike resemblance, cannot but please best, and be pleased in the aptitude of that variety. Whereof lest we should be too timorous, in the awe that our flat sages would form us and dress us, wisest Solomon among his gravest proverbs countenances a kind of ravishment and erring fondness in the entertainment of wedded leisure."

31. But where this sweet intercommunion of thought, in which the beauty of the gentler spirit exercises its soothing influence over man's sterner and rougher nature, is not found, "the solitariness of man, which God had mainly and principally ordered to prevent by marriage, hath no remedy, but lies under a worse condition than the loneliest single life. For, in single life, the absence and remoteness of a helper might inure him to expect

his own comforts out of himself, or to seek with hope; but here the continual sight of his deluded thoughts, without cure, must needs be to him, if especially his complexion incline him to melancholy, a daily trouble and pain of loss, in some degree like that which reprobates feel."

32. "But some are ready to object, that the disposition ought seriously to be considered before. But let them know again, that for all the wariness can be used, it may yet befall a discreet man to be mistaken in his choice, and we have plenty of examples. The soberest and best governed men are least practised in these affairs; and who knows not that the bashful muteness of a virgin may oftentimes hide all the unliveliness and natural sloth which is really unfit for conversation? Nor is there that freedom of access granted or presumed, as may suffice to a perfect discerning till too late; and where any indisposition is suspected, what more usual than the persuasion of friends, that acquaintance, as it increases, will amend all? And lastly, it is not strange, though many, who have spent their youth chastely, are in some things not so quick-sighted, while they haste too eagerly to light the nuptial torch; nor is it therefore that for a modest error a man should forfeit so great a happiness, and no charitable means to release him. Since they who have lived most loosely, by reason of their bold accustoming, prove most successful in their matches, because their wild affections unsettling at will, have been as so many divorces to teach them experience; whereas the sober man, honouring the appearance

of modesty, and hoping well of every social virtue under that veil, may easily chance to meet with a mind to all due conversation inaccessible, and to all the more estimable and superior purposes of matrimony, useless and almost lifeless. And, what a solace, what a fit help such a consort would be through the whole life of a man, is less pain to conjecture than to have experience."

33. In the "Apology for his Early Life and Writings," which forms a part of the present volume, Milton glances at the ideas of love he had gathered out of Plato and Xenophon; and, in my note on the place, I have translated a short passage of Diotima's speech in the *Symposion*, where the philosopher discloses his most poetical and elevated fancies on this mysterious subject. Milton himself, however, in his speculations on marriage, has embodied the whole theory of the priestess in a grand dithyrambic digression, which, being brief, I shall here introduce: "Marriage is a covenant, the very being whereof consists not in a forced co-habitation, and counterfeit performance of duties, but in unfeigned love and peace. And of matrimonial love, no doubt but that was chiefly meant, which by the ancient sages was thus parabled; that Love, if he be not twin-born, yet hath a brother wondrous like him called Anteros; whom while he seeks all about, his chance is to meet with many false and feigning desires, that wander singly up and down in his likeness. By them, in their borrowed garb, Love, though not wholly blind, as poets wrong him, yet having but one eye, as being born

an archer aiming, and that eye not the quietest in this dark region here below, which is not Love's proper sphere, partly out of the simplicity and credulity which is native to him, often deceived, embraces and consorts him with these obvious and suborned striplings, as if they were his mother's own sons ; for so he thinks them, while they subtly keep themselves most on his blind side. But after a while, as his manner is, when soaring up into the high tower of his apogeeum, above the shadow of the earth, he darts out the direct rays of his then most piercing eyesight upon the impostures and trim disguises that were used with him, and discerns that this is not his genuine brother, as he imagined ; he has no longer the power to hold fellowship with such a personated mate. For straight his arrows lose their golden heads, and shed their purple feathers, his silken braids untwine, and slip their knots ; and that original and fiery virtue given him by fate all on a sudden goes out, and leaves him undified and despoiled of all his force ; till finding Anteros at last, he kindles and repairs the almost faded ammunition of his deity, by the reflection of a co-equal and homogeneal fire. Thus mine author sung it to me ; and, by the leave of those who would be counted the only grave ones, this is no mere amatorious novel ;—though to be wise and skilful in these matters, men heretofore of greatest name in virtue have esteemed it one of the highest arcs that human contemplation, circling upward, can make from the globy sea whereon she stands ; but this is a deep and serious verity, showing us

that love in marriage cannot live nor subsist, unless it be mutual; and where love cannot be, there can be left of wedlock nothing but the empty husk of an outside matrimony, as undelightful and unpleasing to God as any other kind of hypocrisy."

34. It is dangerous where conjecture has already been so busy, and to so little purpose, to bring forward any new surmises, which further investigation may, perhaps, prove equally unfounded with those long ago exploded; but it seems not improbable that the close and continuous consideration of love and marriage, to which he was led while composing these treatises on divorce, where so much is said of Adam and Eve, and the happiness of Eden, may have suggested the first hints of *Paradise Lost*. At all events, it is certain that those immortal syllables, though transposed, are found in the earliest of these works. "It will best behove our seriousness to follow rather what moral Sinai prescribes equal to our strength, than fondly to think within our strength all that *LOST PARADISE* relates." (1) And many passages, too many to be here introduced, appear to contain the germs of thoughts beheld mature in the poem. For example, his notions of the site of hell:—

" Such place eternal justice had prepared
 For these rebellious, here their prison ordained
 In utter darkness, and their portion set
 As far removed from God and light of heaven
 As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole." (2)

(1) *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, Book i. ch. 11.

(2) *Paradise Lost*, i. 70—74.

"To banish for ever into a local hell, whether in the air or in the centre, or in that uttermost and bottomless gulf of chaos, deeper from holy bliss than the world's diameter multiplied." (3)—"But still they fly back to the primitive institution, and would have us re-enter Paradise against the sword that guards it."(4)

35. Of his political works, which it is our intention, if the public approve, hereafter to reprint in succession, it will for that reason, be unnecessary to speak at great length. They all breathe the same spirit, and are filled with the same admirable learning; which, instead of damping his fancy, or clouding his views, as in the writings of inferior men is observable, seems in him only to contribute, by its riches and variety, to bear him up in his speculations above the usual pitch even of highest politicians. But this soaring is not into the region of clouds and visions. He never loses sight of the practicable and fit; and seldom advises what, if adopted and acted on, would not tend to better the condition of mankind. Contrary to what is asserted and commonly believed, he was, if one may so speak, too little bigoted in his attachment to democracy; and suffered, for peace sake, too many concessions to be made to the upper orders, in his plans of government.

36. For these modifications of his theory, however, we must look to the circumstances of the times,

(3) *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, i. 3.

(4) *Ibid.* i. 13.

wherein, if men of learning, reflection, and experience aimed at the establishment of a popular government, they had to struggle with an invincible phalanx of prejudices, taking shelter among the ruins of the old absolute monarchy, and of a church too similar in character, and issuing every instant from their hiding-places, to interrupt all attempts at reformation. In fact, the events of those times were in many respects the prototypes of what is taking place at present. An overgrown and unpatriotic aristocracy, confounding their own privileges with the constitution, were incessantly labouring to convert the government into an instrument for effecting their own purposes, careless whether they thwarted or advanced the interests of the nation. Every man who honestly advocated the rights of the people was called a demagogue; to hope for a better condition for the poor was to be a visionary; virtue was hypocrisy; and religion, because it prevailed among the lower orders, was puritanism, fanaticism, dreaming.

37. But with similar difficulties all who aim at conferring permanent blessings on their race must be content to struggle. For, as the majority have no other foundation for their opinions than custom and tradition, they cling to old abuses as to sacred reliques, which though they know neither why nor wherefore, seem to be endued with some miraculous properties infused into them by the state conjurors of former ages. Feeling within themselves no disposition to make great exertions, or great sacrifices, for the common good, it is beyond their power to

conceive how sweet to him who has been nurtured in noble sentiments are the hardships, labours, dangers endured for his country. They know not that enthusiasm, the inspiration of great spirits, fills his mind with a delight independent of external circumstances. That, even though sure to be defrauded of his fame, he would still, by the spontaneous activity of his nature, be urged to the performance of his highest duties, like that heroic Roman, who argued, at the Forks of Caudium, that even infamy is to be encountered in furtherance of our country's good.

38. When Milton entered on his political career, monarchy had fallen, and a republican government been established in England. He was too wise, however, not to be aware that a new form of polity, not in unison with the established prejudices and inherited sympathies of the people, though approved by their awakened judgment, might easily perish amidst the stormy violence which had accompanied its birth. Had he calculated, therefore, like a selfish worldling, as the example of too many might have been his warrant for doing, he would have espoused the interests of the Commonwealth with prudent reserve, and, while clamouring for the democracy, have deluded the royal party with secret professions of attachment. Kings in distress promise, at least, if they do not pay; and such abilities as his would have purchased from the exiled Stuart the reversion of a dukedom.

39. With the uprightness and honour of one who had from the cradle made the good and the beauti-

ful, as he himself somewhere expresses it, the object of his impassioned study, Milton took no counsel of his interests or of his fears; but, throwing himself impetuously into the current of the times, maintained with unparalleled ardour and eloquence the cause of the people. The die had already been cast; England was a republic; its late monarch had perished on the scaffold. As there existed two parties in the country, of which one wholly condemned the execution of Charles I., not grounding their disapprobation on this, that he had suffered unjustly, but on the abstract principle, that the people, whatever may be the character of their ruler,—were he even a Nero or a Domitian,—have not the right to punish him capitally, Milton undertook, in his “Tenure of Kings,” to maintain the contrary proposition; contending that a prince may be guilty of crimes by the commission of which he forfeits his kingly privilege, degenerates into a tyrant, and justly arms his former subjects against him.

40. In this, however, he advances no new doctrine; nothing, as it should seem, in the least at variance with the practice and opinions of all nations. The difficulty always is to determine when a king has passed the boundary dividing authority from violence, and stepped out of the domain of royalty into that of tyranny; and therefore, whatever may be contended in considering the abstract question, and which way soever the matter may be decided, men of all parties, even the advocates of absolute monarchy, as history shows, will practically, if not in words, acknowledge the cogency of the argu-

ments. And so far Milton has the suffrage of mankind in general. Perhaps, indeed, were the subject thoroughly examined, his views would be supported by many who, not comprehending the whole scope of his reasoning, now start back with horror at the bare supposition that they agree with him.

41. He has been called a regicide, and the advocate of regicides. He was certainly a republican; but if he was also a regicide, he knew it not himself, nor were many of his distinguished contemporaries a whit more conscious of the fact than he. To be a regicide in principle, is to contend for the putting to death of lawful kings, as such, merely for being in possession of the first honours of the state, and of an authority which they exercise lawfully. Now, was Milton such a man? Was he so blind, so lost to all sense of what is just or unjust, so fierce and furious an enemy to the laws of God and man, as to maintain that a magistrate, entrusted with a certain office by the people, and performing the duties of that office blamelessly, is to be seized and put to death? Had such been his doctrine, most thick-sighted and doltish were those sovereign princes, who having witnessed with awful amazement the conduct of the people of England, bringing their late king to trial and punishment, yet received Milton's defence of his countrymen, not merely with cold approval, but with applause. It may be urged that so enkindling, so vast, so irresistible were the powers of his eloquence, that the whole world was dazzled by them. He no doubt thoroughly understood, and with most exquisite skill put in practice,

the arts of persuasion ; but it would require something beyond the force of art, and partaking rather of the nature of miracle, to obtain from men, while openly aiming at their lives, praise, countenance, congratulation. To achieve this, the one party must be a magician, or the other party must be fools.

42. The presumption, therefore, *a priori*, is, that Milton was not a regicide ; in fact, could not be, since princes concurred with him in his political opinions. And well might they concur with him, for, so far as they were lawful monarchs, bent on exercising conscientiously and justly the authority entrusted to them for the people's good, Milton contended strenuously for their rights, proving they were entitled to all just obedience and honour, as holding, by general consent, the sovereign power and awful majesty of the people. This is everywhere his doctrine, both in the First and Second Defence, and indeed, throughout his writings wherever the question comes under consideration.

43. But what doctrine, then, did he maintain, that his political character should be covered with so much obloquy ?—TYRANNICIDE. The doctrine that justice, like God, whose offspring she is, knows no respect of persons, but visits on all transgressors of the law, the penalty which law exacts from all transgressors. He thought that falsehood, perfidy, breach of oaths, violence, rapine, oppression of honest men, persecution to the death for conscience sake, pillaging and wasting the land with fire and sword, were acts unlawful, acts which laid bare

their perpetrator to the sword of justice. He maintained the coronation oath to be a covenant between the people and the king, binding the former to all lawful obedience, restraining the authority of the latter within certain limits; and he supposed it possible that either party might break this covenant. While the individual entrusted with supreme authority acted justly, he regarded him as a king; when he overpassed the limits prescribed to his authority by the law, or general reason, he considered him a tyrant, or public enemy, whom it was lawful to deal with accordingly. And for this view of the matter he had the concurring testimony of many good kings, and of some bad ones, among others, of James I., who had remembered so much of the lessons of Buchanan. Locke, afterwards, with the approbation of king William III., put forward the same opinions, and I know not at what subsequent period of our history they came to be accounted unconstitutional.

44. To prove the truth of the above doctrine, and vindicate his countrymen for having reduced his principles to action, were the prime objects of his "*Eikonoklastes*," and "*Defence of the People of England*." The former treatise, intended to work conviction in those who spoke the English language, which he loved, and, for the expression of sentiment, and the inner affections of the mind, preferred to all others, was accordingly written in the mother tongue; but the latter, aiming at the perhaps more difficult achievement of convincing foreign nations and kings, that the senate and peo-

ple of England had, in the late transaction, not overstepped the strict bounds of justice, was of necessity composed in Latin, then the language of public business throughout Europe, and employed by the republic in all its negotiations with foreign states. This inconvenience, therefore, was not at the time to be avoided; but since a wholly different taste in literature has been generated, in spite of the classic labours of our universities, Milton's most finished and finest reasoned prose composition has fallen into a still more utter neglect, if I may hazard the solecism, than that in which his other works have, with one exception, been buried.

45. But, as may easily be supposed, the support of this proposition, though mainly his object, does not hinder the consideration of other important truths. He was too wise to make himself the slave of his subject. From time to time, therefore, as he paused to give breathing time to the reader,—for he required none himself,—other subordinate questions are introduced and discussed pleasantly; or, perhaps, Salmasius, then esteemed a giant in literature, is for sport-sake tossed round the ring on the horns of his merciless dilemmas. His mirth Doctor Johnson found to be grim and terrible. It is, in fact, the mirth of a man laughing at the downfal of arrogance and presumption—the mirth of the just at beholding the wicked caught in their own snares—the mirth which, by a daring licence of speech, the Psalmist attributes to the Almighty, whom he introduces rejoicing over the

calamities of wrong doers, and saying, “I will laugh when their fear cometh.”

46. However, there are occasions on which Milton really unbends, and laughs heartily with the reader. Some expressions, also, are found scattered up and down the work, at which Phocion himself would have smiled, though, as I shall presently remark, sound taste must wholly condemn the employment of them in such a treatise.—But the distinguishing characteristic of these productions is the spirit of religion and humanity which throughout pervades them. He would inspire in all men the deepest reverence for God their Father, and for each other that brotherly love, forbearance, charity, recommended by the precepts and example of Christ. Strife, tumult, contention, civil war, he overwhelms with abhorrence, inferior only to that which he pours upon tyranny, the parent of all the worst evils that afflict society. Properly to serve God, or perform his duties towards mortals, he maintains that man must be free to follow the dictates of his will, which is no other than reason in activity; for the slave, that is, the subject of an absolute monarch, can never maintain that steadfast, unswerving perseverance in well-doing, which religion and civil wisdom require.

47. The faults into which, during these political controversies, Milton was precipitated by the vehemence of his passions, are precisely those which most easily beset ardent-tempered men. Demosthenes, contending against Philip and his hired

advocates, thinks no excess of vituperation too violent, no term of abuse too big for the mouth of his anger; and Milton, with equal genius, but inferior art, wields the same thunder, and with no less daring casts it in the astonished faces of all who oppose him. But he sometimes, as I have already hinted, exercises his power unskilfully. Hence, it must be admitted—for I love truth still more than I love Milton—his language is in many places coarse and offensive, such as I read with pain, and sincerely wish away—that our great, and, save in this, almost perfect author, might be every thing the twin-brother of Shakespeare in genius should be. But the reader will excuse my being brief on this subject; for I uncover the imperfections of Milton tremblingly and reverently, as I would those of a parent. His genius deeply partook of the prophetic character; and it is not for me, who have been soothed and strengthened from my childhood by the divine music of his verse, to come forward, and in the words I have learned of him, to babble of those failings from which no mortal is free.

48. From what has been said above, may be inferred, what were the prevailing opinions of Milton's age. Philosophy, ceasing to be speculative, applied itself to public business; and sought, by seizing the helm of government, to steer the ship of the Commonwealth, in the direction most agreeable to the wishes of all wise and good men. The records of ancient and modern times were ransacked, in the hope of discovering hints for the im-

provement of society. Principles favourable to toleration were gradually established. Religion, greatly purified from the errors of the Roman church, began powerfully to influence the polities of the country, to operate a reform in manners, to raise and purify the character of its votaries. For the first time, perhaps, since the age of the apostles, Christianity was put in practice on a grand scale, by high-minded, disinterested men, who sought in earnest to lay the foundations of an evangelical commonwealth, modelled in harmony with the precepts of the gospel, such as no other age or country ever yet aimed at. The Puritans, in fact, were genuine Christians, the most perfect, perhaps, that, with the failings inherent in human nature, we can ever expect to see on earth. They united with the sincerest piety, and the fervent belief of all truth, a martial temper more stern and unbending than chivalry and knighthood ever inspired. Their courage was indomitable. Wise in council, adventurous and enthusiastic in the field, they were precisely the soldiers a great general would choose with which to subdue the world.

49. In the midst of this effervescence of the Christian spirit, bold philosophers and sophists arose, startling the world with the novelty, or evil tendency of their doctrines. Bacon had already made open war on the barren systems of the schools; and, while Europe was still admiring the grandeur and comprehensiveness of his views, Hobbes of Malmesbury appeared on the philoso-

phical arena, armed with genius, and the subtlest spirit of sophistry, and prepared, in defiance of all who might oppose, to support the wildest and most dangerous paradoxes. Harrington, Algernon Sidney, Andrew Marvel, Clarendon, and many others destined to obtain a name in history, laboured contemporaneously with Milton; and their ideas failed not to exercise a certain influence over the public mind, though, whether considered with reference to their own or to future ages, this influence was much less powerful than that of the great epic poet.

50. Hitherto, however, Milton has been, since his own times, chiefly influential as a poet; his prose works having, as I observed above, been from that time to this comparatively neglected. Several of the accidental causes of this neglect have already been glanced at: they must now be more fully explained. By some ingenious writers the circumstance has been sought to be accounted for by alleging the elevated character of the works themselves. But this is unsatisfactory, for which of them is more lofty than *Paradise Lost*? Besides, were this the true cause, all attempts at recommending them to the public must prove fruitless, since their tone can never be lowered, nor can the intellect of the generality ever be raised to the relish of compositions, which, according to this supposition, are to be considered above the mental reach even of literary men. Indeed, the theory of this writer would, if true, wholly exculpate us as a nation from all blame for laying them aside, and

betaking ourselves to writers more on a level with our capacities; for, by what rule are we compelled to purchase and study the works of any man, if they be above our comprehension?

51. If there be any culpability, it must, under this supposition, rest with the author, who, if he desired to be read, and promote the cause of religion and virtue,—as most assuredly he did,—should have reflected that it was his first duty not so to clothe his thoughts in the splendour and brightness of eloquence, as to render them, like the sun, too painful to be gazed on by any not gifted with the eyes of eagles. No one knew better than he that the greatest men have by art contrived to indue their most hidden thoughts with a transparent dress. He was familiar with those dialogues in which the abstrusest doctrines of ontology, the highest speculations on God and nature, and the spiritual essence of the mind, to which man's intellect has ever soared, are rendered not merely comprehensible, but absolute matter of amusement. He would have been aware, therefore, that though his ideas rise far indeed above the pitch of ordinary contemplation, they yet strayed not beyond the reach of such understandings as God has bestowed upon Englishmen.

52. Another fancy of the same writers is, that Milton having been a teacher, and the world, like a mitching schoolboy, not delighting to be taught, his fit audience must always be few. I hope better things of the world. For whoever is desirous

of learning what is truth,—and the number actuated by this holy desire is not small,—is fit to be the auditor of him who teaches truth. And, to speak honestly, I have not yet learned to think so meanly of my countrymen, as not to believe that this island contains many myriads to whom truth, both in politics and religion, is precious as life itself. Let them only know in what secret or remote shrine it may be found, and the road thither, I am persuaded, will be immediately trodden by the feet of innumerable pilgrims, full of hope, of courage to dare, of fortitude to suffer, of perseverance to obtain. Englishmen are still Englishmen. The love of freedom—which is based on truth—is ever their ruling passion; and if, as in the case of Milton, they sometimes wholly or in part neglect their benefactors, and those who best would serve them, it is error, not ingratitude, or a sullen aversion to be taught whatever is for their good.

53. Every man who ably and honestly advocates the cause of freedom and good government is popular in England. For, naturally and of necessity the people's sympathies are linked to those who prove themselves their friends, who labour to diminish their burdens, and diffuse among them a just and wholesome relish for knowledge; to provide civil and religious instruction for their children, and raise them to that mental condition in which they may, with safety to themselves and to the state, exercise all the rights of freemen. For services of this kind the present generation is indebted

to many distinguished commoners and lords, who daily, in the senate or at popular assemblies, urge forward the work of reformation.

54. But, among those who most honourably distinguish themselves in the service of the people, advocating the cause which Milton advocated, and diffusing far and wide the principles that inflamed his mind, and rendered him eloquent above all who have written in English, the gentlemen who conduct the better part of the public press deserve most of the country. What the pulpit is in religion, that is the press in civil affairs. It is the weapon by the use of which Liberty must ultimately stand or fall, with which she must hew down those stubborn prejudices that, at every step, obstruct her movements; and, by inspiring a salutary terror in her opponents, command the leisure necessary for building up that vast edifice of political wisdom, within which she may for the future entrench herself.

55. And, in spite of much hostility and many untoward circumstances, how powerful is the influence of the press, and how all but complete the freedom we even now enjoy in England ! Here only, within the limits of the Old World, is it lawful to express an honest opinion, or to arraign, when truth requires it, the impolicy, or improvidence, or lukewarmness of our rulers. Here only, when oppressed or persecuted at home, can the liberal and virtuous of other nations find a secure refuge. This is the place where, as at Athens in old times, men of all countries, of all parties, of all religions,

take sanctuary when they need it. And the glory of England, which, in Milton's days, was thought to be enhanced by the crowding hither of strangers from distant countries, to be instructed in our learning and theological arts, is rendered doubly bright now, by the pilgrimage which all free and noble spirits, that spurn the universal yoke of the Continent, make daily to this favoured land.

56. And what but our freedom—though still far from perfect—and the virtues which grow out of it, causes the English name to be everywhere held in honour, and renders it a passport and a safeguard, as I have myself experienced, even among savages in rebellion against their native prince? To be associated as far as known—and where is it not?—with highmindedness, generosity, and the pride that scorns whatever is mean and ungentlemanly? In every land whither Providence has led me, I have enjoyed the inexpressible satisfaction of hearing the name of my country pronounced with respect; of finding that, though excelled, perhaps, by one country in this, by another in that, England was universally supposed to surpass all in freedom, public virtue, religion, and those advantages of political strength and grandeur unrelinquishably possessed by the inheritors of those virtues.

57. To return, however, whence I have thus insensibly digressed, to the causes which have hitherto obstructed the popularity of Milton's prose works: it may be proper briefly to notice the reason assigned by D'Israeli; namely, that having been writ-

ten for the times in which the author lived, they naturally went, with the times, out of date. By the same reasoning, and with much greater probability, the contemporaries of Demosthenes or Cicero might have concluded that the speeches of those great orators would sink with the succeeding age into oblivion ; yet we find, after the lapse, in one case, of more than two thousand years, mankind still taking a lively interest in those compositions, while such as desire to exercise in their own day a similar influence, dwell on their polished and irresistible logic with rapture. This reason, therefore, unless we admit extraordinary inferiority in Milton, is still more unsatisfactory than either of the former. Other causes must be sought, and history is at hand to supply them.

58. It has been shown that, in all his works, Milton stands forth the advocate of popular principles of government; and these principles having, at the Restoration, been abandoned both by the people and the aristocracy, who returned like animals devoid of reason to their old servitude under the Stuarts, no one felt disposed to take up books every sentence of which must have awakened pangs of conscience, by contrasting their actual servility with the manly condition from which they had fallen. It is, in fact, natural to shun whatever engenders a sense of humiliation ; and, to justify their conduct in so doing, men will discover reasons, good or bad, that, if they cannot stand well in their own eyes, they may at least seem to each other to be under the influence of some rational

principles of action. Hence the lettered slaves who sprang up under the fostering patronage of Charles II., and his most dissolute and despicable court, whose principal aim it was to depose the Almighty from his throne in the hearts of their countrymen, laboured with all the earnestness of hirelings to dim the glory of Milton, and those other holy and magnanimous men, who, with high and honest views, had sought to command for themselves and their brethren the full enjoyment of liberty, religious and civil.

59. By this horde of unprincipled sophists the defender of the people of England was maliciously confounded with that host of nameless fanatics that, during the troubles of the commonwealth, had issued forth from the crannies and dark places of society, filling the land, like locusts, with the unceasing murmur of their bigotry. The slanders of Salmasius, Morus, Dumoulin, and others of that stamp, were re-minted, and issued by royal authority. Every art which malice could suggest, or baseness invent, was put in practice to cover the memory of the commonwealth with obloquy ; and Milton, as its most formidable defender,—though, by the interference of powerful friends, he escaped the king's axe, which was sharpened to deprive England of the *Paradise Lost*,—yet could not fail, both during life and afterwards, to be held up as an object of abhorrence by all whom the re-establishment of servitude supplied with dishonourable bread. Even Hobbes, himself a persecuted man, and one whom the consciousness of genius should

have inspired with nobler thoughts, could not resist the promptings of his slavish temper, to inflict a paltry wound on the **MAN OF THE COMMONWEALTH.**

60. Such, it appears to me, is the true cause why the prose works of Milton have so long been condemned to dust and cobwebs. For when once the spawn of the Restoration had heaped upon them, as on a brood of Titans, whole mountains of contumely and falsehood, and thus almost wholly concealed their existence from the public, a taste for a very different order of books was formed throughout the land; for books filled, like Rochester's, Sedley's, Wycherly's, with unspeakable coarseness and obscenity, with impiety, irreligion, and the most ignoble adulation; and it is easy to imagine that, among the admirers of bacchanals so gross and godless, an author such as Milton, in port and majesty like a prophet, and with garments scented by the sacred incense of the altar, must have proved an unwelcome guest. Vice rapidly relaxes and enervates the mind; and the public, growing daily more and more familiar with grovelling sentiments, and the licentious passions which, during Charles the Second's reign, constituted the breath of literary inspiration, soon became entirely incapable of deriving pleasure from compositions such as Milton's, where profligacy receives no countenance. Their religious character, therefore, once their passport to popularity, now stood in their way; for to quote a verse of Scripture seemed to smell of republicanism. And, although Sir Robert Filmer, and

some few others, endeavoured to combat the advocates of democracy with their own weapons, by forcing certain mangled texts into the service of absolute power, it was upon the whole thought dangerous, at court, to make any reference to the great storehouse and armoury of the Roundheads.

61. Cast, by these means, into temporary oblivion, they were long suffered to remain in it. For most literary men are too intent on advancing their own reputation, to turn aside, with some risk of endangering it, to rescue from undeserved neglect the orphan remains of genius. They fear, at least in the service of the dead, to rouse the serpent guardians of prejudice; and with a worldly prudence, for which, according to their characters, men will blame or commend them, relinquish to others, bolder or less wise, the task of doing justice to those who can no longer actively vindicate themselves.

62. But this policy, however laudable it may be considered by others, I can neither admire nor adopt. In the common intercourse of life we are grateful to whomsoever instructs or amuses us, much more to him who begets in our minds a love of the good and beautiful; and if, in our presence, his character be misprized, or evil-spoken of by others, we would generously, in consideration of what we owe him, hazard something to vindicate his good name. The same course we should, I think, pursue when he who affords us instruction or delight is dead, and therefore no longer able to explain, develope, or defend his opinions, by the

misinterpreting, perhaps, of which he suffers in the estimation of mankind. It seems to be our duty to labour with an earnestness proportioned to the benefits he may have conferred on us, to obtain for him, as far as our influence extends, a hearing. It signifies nothing to plead our inability. Love is fertile in expedients; and he who, with honest enthusiasm, undertakes to serve the greatest man, when suffering from injustice, will find, like the mouse in the fable, that even the most distinguished for strength may be indebted to his weakness. And who can describe the delight with which the student bends over the page of Milton? with which he witnesses the kindling of that impetuous spirit, when rousing all his energies to contend for his own glory, or the glory of his country? Who but must love him—who but must, in spirit, embrace him with tears of pleasure, when soaring, in the fervour of his eloquence, to a height of grandeur never surpassed by man, he pours forth his noblest sentiments in defence of freedom? And who now, at this distance of time, can listen to those bursts of enthusiasm, so frequent in his works, even though lisped by the lips of a child, without the most tumultuous emotions of mingled rapture and wonder?

63. All these things considered, it appears to be matter of astonishment,—notwithstanding the causes we have enumerated,—that men should so generally have abstained from the perusal of works so palpably excellent. Yet Addison, who, in the Spectator, endeavoured to do justice to Paradise

Lost,—which had also, until then, experienced a considerable share of neglect,—took no pains to rescue the prose treatises from the same fate. But the causes that had at first thrown them into the shade were still in operation. And though, soon after the Revolution of 1688, Toland had meritoriously sought to bring them once more into notice, his success was extremely partial; for few or no references are made to any of them by the writers of what has been absurdly called the Augustan age of English literature.

64. In the year 1738, however, when the minister was supposed to be meditating some grievous restrictions on the press, Thompson the poet, an ardent lover of liberty, published an edition of the Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing, with a spirited preface. Dr. Birch had, indeed, a few years earlier edited the whole of the prose works, first in folio, and, a second time, in quarto, with a laborious biography of the author prefixed. Gradually, from that period to the present, these trophies of the Commonwealth have attracted, among the lovers of literature, more and more notice; and it should not be forgotten that among those who have done most service in this way are several clergymen of the Church of England.

65. Of Dr. Johnson, who, unfortunately for himself, is numbered among those that have written the life of Milton, I must necessarily speak; but, though of all his adversaries, from the days of Salmasius and Dumoulin to the present, he may be regarded as the most mischievous and unjust,

it is very far from being my desire to remember his hostility with bitterness: for he too, in spite of many failings, was a good man, and a distinguished writer. It is now, however, very generally acknowledged, that in undertaking a Life of Milton he ventured upon what he was unfit to execute; and if, at the same time, his libel were omitted in the Lives of the Poets, and condemned to the oblivion it deserves, the following remarks would be in some measure unnecessary. But so long as that production is reprinted, and circulated, every honest and impartial man, however favourably disposed in other respects towards Johnson, must, when Milton is his subject, do his best to defend him from its envenomed calumnies.

66. Dr. Johnson, no matter how, and perhaps both the cause and manner were unknown even to himself, had early imbibed principles favourable to arbitrary power; and, notwithstanding that he accepted of a pension from a prince of the House of Hanover, is suspected of having been secretly a Jacobite. He was, besides, constitutionally averse from the sportive pranks of freedom, which, by demanding the grounds of opinions in reality based upon a cloud, would have seriously ruffled his gravity. He loved to exercise, in his own person, a sort of dictatorship; and, with a consistency not often found in such petty despots, was willing the government should exercise the same despotic authority over him. In Milton, however, he discovered a man the most impatient of servitude; who had, moreover, contributed, in no small degree, to the down-

fall of the Stuarts, defended the tyrannicide of his countrymen, and overwhelmed with contempt all who thought as Johnson thought. It was, therefore, natural, and almost excusable, in the successful essayist and biographer, to aim at crushing the reputation of the old democratical puritan, by accusing him of plagiarism, domestic tyranny, laxity of morals, and insinuating, cautiously, a charge of irreligion.

67. The only motive which, had he well calculated, might have deterred him, would have been a consideration of the irreparable injury he must thus inflict on his own fame, by passing down to posterity as a wrong-headed sophist, insensible to the beauty of liberty and truth, destitute of sympathy for mankind at large, and sold, no matter for what reward, to the enemies and oppressors of the people. Such, at least, has been the result, such his punishment ; and as Milton rises higher and higher towards the zenith, Johnson must set. They cannot dwell together in the same heaven of fame, or if they do, Johnson's star must "pale its ineffectual fire" in the neighbourhood of Milton's glory.

68. This, in many respects no doubt, is to be regretted ; but some good will spring from it, if it teach us, as the example of an execution teaches, to blame with less acrimony the illustrious dead. With respect to myself, no example is necessary to cause me to speak of Johnson with moderation, for I honour his memory, as I do that of every other good man ; but honouring Milton's much more, as

that of one every way greater and better, the reader, I trust, will pardon me the warmth I cannot but feel when dishonour and obloquy are attempted to be thrown, by what hand soever, upon his most venerable name. At first sight, Johnson's attack appears to be grave, and conducted without any remarkable outrage on public decency. It has little of the buffoonery, scurrility, and coarse invective with which Aristophanes attacks Socrates. He does not accuse the poet of filching a cloak, of measuring flea-leaps, of causing himself to be suspended in a basket between heaven and earth, to escape, while under the cestrum of meditation, the hebetating influence of the grosser atmosphere. His charges of impiety are less broadly insinuated, though introduced with inferior skill; but, in several points, no less likely in modern times to tell against the accused, he excels the ancient libeller in adroitness. Knowing how preeminently loyal and attached to their kings the English are accounted, he substitutes, in his pleading, the word "regicide" for "tyrannicide;" represents the poet devoured by the most offensive vanity, which, he says, not only led him to entertain ridiculously lofty ideas of himself, but enviously and grudgingly to defraud other men of their just praise; affirms, that in his domestic government, he was a tyrant, a bad husband, a bad father, one who, with the means of doing better in his possession, gave his children a wretched penurious education; that, on returning from his travels, he most unpatriotically engaged in the instruction of youth;

which Johnson, who had tried it himself, endeavours to confound with mechanical employments by calling it a “trade;” nay, more, that he pushed his republican habits so far as to adopt an abstemious system of diet, which to an elegant epicure and diner-out, like Johnson, must have appeared still worse than writing against the bishops. To crown all, to sum up his numerous delinquencies in one fearful word, he insinuates, but hesitates to assert positively, that Milton was ~~poor~~—that he suffered hunger; but that yet, in the midst of his indigence, his proud heathenish spirit looked with intolerable scorn upon tyrants and slaves, and dared to dream of eternal fame.

69. The fox which, in the fable, escaped from a trap with the loss of his nether bushy appendage, abhorred ever after all allusion to tails. So Johnson felt out of temper when the course of his narrative led him to speak of poverty. Nevertheless, he who, in writing to a bookseller, could subscribe himself the “Dinnerless,” might have been expected to exhibit some sympathy for genius in distress. But this, perhaps, was weakness. The recollection of how frequently he had sat down hungry,—not with Philosophy, for that he never knew,—but with Criticism and Biography, was no doubt painful; and, falling on better days, he was tempted to despise the wisdom which, like his own erewhile, knew not how to provide itself with a dinner.

70. Another sore point with Johnson was, that Milton should be said to have rejected, after the

Restoration, the place of Latin secretary to Charles the Second. Few men heartily believe in the existence of virtue above their own reach. He knew what he would have done under similar circumstances ; he knew that, had he lived during the period of the Commonwealth, a similar offer from the “ Regicides” would have met with no “ sturdy refusal” from him ; he knew it was in his eyes no sin to accept of a pension from one whom he considered an usurper : how, then, could he believe, what must have humiliated him in his own esteem, that the old blind republican, bending beneath the weight of years and indigence, still cherished heroic virtue in his soul, and spurned the offer of a tyrant ! Oh, but he had filled the same office under Oliver Cromwell ! Milton regarded “ Old Noll ” as a greater and better Sylla to whom, in the motto to his work against the restoration of kingship, he compares him, and evidently hoped to the last, what was always, perhaps, intended by the Protector, and understood between them, that, as soon as the troubles of the times should be properly appeased, he would establish the republic. In this hope Milton consented to serve with him, not to serve him ; for Cromwell always professed to be the servant of the people. And, after all, there was some difference between Cromwell and Charles II. With the former the author of *Paradise Lost* had something in common ; they were both great men, they were both enemies to that remnant of feudal barbarism, which, supported by prejudice and ignorance,

had for ages exerted so fatal an influence over the destinies of their country.

71. Minds of such an order,—in some things, though not in all, resembling,—might naturally enough co-operate: for they could respect each other. But with what sense of decorum, or reverence for his own character, remembering the glorious cause for which he had struggled, could Milton have reconciled to his conscience, taking office under the returned Stuart, to mingle daily with the crowd of atheists who blasphemed the Almighty, and with swinish vices debased his image in the polluted chambers of Whitehall? The poet regarded them with contemptuous abhorrence; and, if I am not exceedingly mistaken, described them, under the names of devils, in the court of their patron and inspirer below. Besides, even had they possessed the few virtues compatible with servitude, it would have been matter of constant chagrin, of taunt and reviling on one side, and silent hatred on the other, to have brought together republican and slave in the same bureau, and to have compelled a democratic pen to mould court phrases for a despicable master.

72. So far, however, was the biographer from comprehending the character of the man whose life he undertook to write, that he seems to have thought it an imputation on him, and a circumstance for which it is necessary to pity his lot, that the dissolute nobles of the age seldom resorted to his humble dwelling! The sentiment is worthy of Salma-

sius. But was there then living a man who would not have been honoured by passing under the shadow of that roof?—by listening to the accents of those inspired lips?—by being greeted and remembered by him, whose slightest commendation was immortality? Elijah or Elisha, or Moses, or David, or Paul of Tarsus, would have sat down with Milton, and found in him a kindred spirit. But the slave of Lady Castlemaine, or the traitor Monk, or Rochester, or the husband of Miss Hyde, or that Lord Chesterfield who saw what Hamilton describes, and dared not with his sword revenge the insult, might, forsooth, have thought it a piece of condescension to be seen in the Delphic cavern of England, whence proceeded those sacred verses which, in literature have raised her above all other nations, to the level of Greece itself!

73. In every point of view, however, Johnson was unhappy in his attempts at appreciating Milton. But he knew what would tell with the vulgar; and, therefore, not caring for what inference might be drawn by the more judicious, boldly advanced what he desired to be believed, without giving himself the trouble to inquire whether it were true or not. To lessen the authority of a man's political opinions, it is impossible to conceive a surer way to succeed with the unreflecting than by creating the belief that he was a closet-philosopher, or statesman, who amused himself with making governments on paper, and like another Jupiter regulating, from his throne of clouds, the affairs of a world existing only in his imagination. This service is

what Johnson undertakes to perform for Milton, who, in his eyes, was a poor recluse scholar, with little experience or knowledge of business. He might, indeed,—for this were difficult to deny,—construct an epic poem; but immediately plunged beyond his depth when he sought to fathom the mysteries of state, which are only to be comprehended by persons, who, like himself and Boswell, had mingled with the great world, and discovered by what secret springs the machine of the commonwealth is kept moving.

74. When drawing up this part of his brief, Johnson must doubtless have lost sight, for a moment, of the circumstances of Milton's life. He must have overlooked that, after acquiring such knowledge as is attainable at an university, and by the most diligent private study, he had, at a ripe age, travelled through several foreign kingdoms, mixing freely with persons of all ranks, carefully noting whatever seemed worthy of remark, having rendered himself so far master of their languages as to be able, in most European countries, to express himself with the fluency of a native; that with the habits and manners of youth, his "trade" of teaching had made him acquainted; that his studies, as his adversaries found to their cost, had rendered him familiar with the transactions of past times; and that, if he really, after all, was ignorant in the science of politics, notwithstanding that he had, during fourteen or fifteen years, been deeply and actively engaged in public business, living among the ablest statesmen of the age, conversing

daily with Cromwell—whom Dr. Johnson, perhaps, will allow to have been something of a politician—if after all this, I say, he was still a novice in state matters, his stupidity must have achieved a marvellous triumph over opportunity.

75. To such a conclusion, however, Dr. Johnson, expert as he is in sophistry, will, perhaps, find it difficult to bring us; and it remains to be comprehended by what logic he could himself have arrived at it: there appear to be but the two ways following:—first, it may be supposed that the scales of prejudice lay so thick upon his eyes that he was incapable of discerning the truth; or, secondly, that discerning it well, he disingenuously wrote contrary to his convictions. Now, which way soever the question be decided, little lustre will thereby be added to the doctor's reputation.

76. On another subject, of a very different nature, the biographer appears to have been desirous of shaking the pillars of Milton's fame; but I hope I may, in this have misunderstood him, though his language seems but too clear. It regards the moral character of the bard, and that too on a point upon which he had been often attacked by his enemies, and was peculiarly sensitive. After relating the circumstances of his first marriage, and the strange visit his wife, scared by “spare diet and hard study,” made, in the course of one month, to her relations, Dr. Johnson adds: “Milton was too busy to much miss his wife; he pursued his studies, *and now and then visited the Lady Margaret Leigh, whom he has mentioned in one of his sonnets.*”

77. Let the reader consider the whole passage. Milton's wife, a month after marriage, leaves him ; but her absence gives him little concern. And how happens this ? Why, he pursues his studies. But did not his heart, whose sensibilities had just been roused by female society, require something to love ? Oh, he now and then visits the Lady Margaret Leigh, whom he has celebrated in one of his sonnets ! Is not the inference clear ? It may, however, be worth while to inquire, who was the Lady Margaret Leigh ? Does she seem to have been a person accustomed to console husbands for the loss of their wives ? It appears she was the daughter of the Earl of Marlborough, High Treasurer of England, under James I. Having married a Captain Dobson, she, according to custom, preserved her title : and being celebrated for her talents and learning, her house would seem to have been the resort of the principal literary men of the day, among whom Milton was one ; so that his visits resolve themselves into being present at, what in fashionable phrase, would perhaps be termed her Conversazioni. But if, after all, Johnson means nothing particular in this passage, it must be admitted he has arranged his words in a very curious manner, and is at least liable to the charge of unskilfulness.

78. And what is meant by “spare diet and hard study?” Is it intended to be insinuated that Mrs. Milton was stinted by her husband in beef and mutton ? Or is the whole only the hallucination of an epicure, whose imagination instantly takes

the alarm at the least hint of abstemiousness? And with respect to the hard studying, what are we to infer?—that, during the honeymoon, Milton sought to impose on his wife the task of conjugating Hebrew verbs, or of wading through those “Locrian Remnants,” which he shortly afterwards recommended to the world? If on the first bringing home of a gay young wife, and in the midst of that flutter of spirits which his condition must necessarily have caused, he could himself study hard, I will answer for the harmlessness of his visits to the Lady Margaret Leigh, or any other lady; and am truly sorry the doctor should have suffered his mind to be distressed by a circumstance in itself so innocent.

79. It is impossible to be serious in rebutting insinuations so absurd. Johnson was in an ill humour all the time he was employed in writing this Life, and saw every thing in a wrong light. Consequently, even as a rhetorical pleading, written *ad captandum vulgus*, his work, notwithstanding that he was a distinguished proficient in the art, is wanting in many of those graces of sophistry, upon which he who advocates a bad cause must principally rely. He does not sufficiently cloak his hatred; frequently becomes confused, and contradicts himself, which, in such a case, has the worst possible appearance; grows abusive, and calls names; and in his eagerness to blacken Milton’s memory, makes assertions which, unfortunately for him, every person has the means of proving to be untrue. This is grievously to sin against the *ars sophistica*,

where all stabbing should be performed adroitly in the dark, or with a smile, as if only in jest. I suspect, however, that his dialectic powers have been very much overrated. He dances the literary Pyrrhic awkwardly, allowing his adversary a hundred opportunities of hitting him, even when he fancies himself best prepared.

80. I have already explained the grounds of Johnson's antipathy to Milton: he hated him because he was the advocate of good government, and he hated all men of similar predilections. But if, independently of politics, he considered him a good, religious man, he should have abstained from writing his life, knowing it is impossible we should do justice to him whom we hate. If, on the other hand, he rated him low in point of virtue and morality, it was his duty to say so, and make that the foundation of his attack; for, by proving his position, he would have emancipated us from what he esteemed the absurd veneration in which we have been accustomed to hold the name of Milton. Instead of doing this, however, he puts on the armour, and takes up the weapons of a sophist. He pretends to participate in our reverence, and, had his powers been equal to the task, would have created in us the belief that nothing could have been more painful to him than to kill an illustrious reputation.

81. But his mask is too thin to conceal the joy he feels when he supposes he has his great enemy at disadvantage; that he hugs and fondles his victim only to feel where he is most vulnerable; that

he coaxes and flatters solely to put him off his guard. Sometimes he amuses him with the hope that he may be allowed to keep his virtue, if he will suffer his political wisdom to be demolished. Anon he places him between the horns of a dilemma in this way :—if he understood not the import of what he said, he was an ignoramus ; if he did, he was guilty of voluntary impiety. Or he undertakes, by the following ingenious method, to convict him of falsehood :—Milton had been accused of having subjected himself to personal chastisement at the University ; in his writings he solemnly denies the charge ; but he says also, in one of his juvenile poems, that there were other things besides threats which he disliked in a college life : Johnson, by altering his words, says what was *more* than threats, was probably punishment ; *ergo*, Milton must be thought, what I think it impiety to write.

82. It is a common artifice for a pleader to aim at irritating the judges against his opponent. Johnson has recourse to this hackneyed trick, where he insinuates that Milton's high opinion of himself was, perhaps, mingled with some contempt for others ; “for scarcely any man ever wrote so much and praised so few.” And, lest the reader should forget it, he again repeats that he is very frugal of his praise. Now, of two things, one is certain : either Johnson had not read the prose works of Milton, and therefore knew not whom he might have praised or blamed ; or, if he had read them, he was on easy terms with his conscience, and

wrote like a Jesuit. He pleased himself, however, with the reflection that, whether what he said were true or not, it would be difficult to convict him; for whatever number of writers you might reckon up, as praised by Milton, he might still answer that he considered them but few. Nevertheless, they are so many, that one might, I think, almost fill a page with their names.

83. The biographer next intimates his belief that Milton had been guilty of the most nefarious action of interpolating king Charles's posthumous work,—the *Eikon Basiliké*, if it was, indeed, written by him,—and then, when he came to write against it, of condemning the monarch for the impiety of his own interpolation! This accusation is made in a most extraordinary sentence, such as none but a sophist could have written. He desires the reader to infer that Milton was rendered dishonest by faction: but the reason he subjoins is absurd; for he was suspected, says he, of having interpolated the *Eikon Basiliké*. Now, no man is dishonest because he may be suspected of this or that; he is dishonest if he has performed a dishonest action; otherwise, he who, without evidence, accuses him of such an act, is himself dishonest, and should bear the penalty attached to such a character.

84. In the next paragraph he sets all logic at defiance; the use of the interpolated prayer, Dr. Johnson contends, was perfectly innocent; “and they,” he adds, “who could so noisily censure it, with a little extension of their malice, could contrive what they wanted to accuse!” But what

pitiful creatures he here endeavours to represent Milton and his colleagues, who having, according to him, the choice of putting into the king's book whatever they pleased, were so silly as to introduce what it required considerable malice to find fault with! To justify their harsh censures, why did they not insert some glaring impiety—something that would stick to his memory, and render it more odious to all succeeding ages? This consideration is of itself sufficient to convince any reasonable man of the utter futility of the charge ; and can add no lustre to the character of him who could make it.

85. He accumulates abuse, and grows more furious as he proceeds : but, luckily, is so often in contradiction with himself, that I am spared the labour of refuting him. Sometimes Milton is treated as a mere grammarian : “ No man forgets his *original trade*; the rights of nations and of kings sink into questions of grammar, if *grammarians* discuss them.” Elsewhere he has a “ pregnancy and vigour of mind peculiar to himself;” is said to have been “ able to select from nature or from story, from ancient fable or from modern science, whatever could illustrate or adorn his thoughts;” and is praised for “ the vigour and amplitude of his mind ;” and is acknowledged to have been “ born for whatever is arduous.” Next he is sneered at for having “ told every man he was equal to his king ;” which he never did, but might have done with good authority, since the Scripture tells us that “ all men are equal before God.”

Then he is said to have “delighted himself with the belief that he had shortened Salmasius’s life:” Milton alludes, in the *Defensio Secunda*, to the report that such had been the fact, but I can discover no delight in his expressions.

86. Proceeding with the confidence of a man who expects no reprisals, Johnson represents the poor schoolmaster and “grammarian” as betraying the liberties of England to Cromwell, as if suddenly all the interests of the nation had depended on him. Previous to his engaging in the service of the state he is described, in one place, as too indigent to keep famine from the door; for, “having tasted the honey of public employment”—Dr. Johnson took the honey and left the employment to others,—“he would not return to hunger and philosophy.” But presently, when he had forgotten what he here says, he obliges us with another version of the story: “Fortune appears not to have had much of his care. In the civil wars he lent his personal estate to the Parliament; but when, after the contest was decided, he solicited repayment, he met not only with neglect, but sharp rebuke; and having tired both himself and his friends, was given up to poverty and hopeless indignation, till he showed how able he was to do greater service. He was then made Latin Secretary, with two hundred pounds a year.” Being a dictionary-maker, Dr. Johnson may be thought to have understood the meaning of common English words, and must therefore have known that, among ordinary mortals, “poverty” and “indigence” are

supposed to be pretty nearly synonymous ; but by the gods they are, I suppose, employed to signify different things ; else he could never, in the same page with the above, have said, “ there is yet no reason to believe that he was *ever reduced to indigence*. His wants, being few, were *competently supplied*.” He was not necessitated, therefore, to pacify his hunger with philosophy, as, had we rashly believed the Doctor’s first assertion, our humanity might have been pained by imagining.

87. In short it is clear that while he was engaged in writing this Life of Milton, Johnson’s better and worse angel were at constant war, the former pulling him by the sleeve on one side, the latter on the other ; and that he sometimes listened to the angel, and sometimes, perhaps more frequently, to the fiend. “ Such is his (Milton’s) malignity, that hell grows darker at his frown,” says the latter, who might be supposed to be acquainted with what passes below. But this is strange, answers the angel, since “ in Milton every line breathes sanctity of thought and purity of manners.” But the devil soon gets the upper hand, and goes on to say, that in 1659, he printed his treatise of Civil Power, &c. to gratify his malevolence to the clergy ; that next year he was found kicking when he could no longer strike ; that he skulked from the returning king, (who it might be said, had also skulked for some years from the parliament;) that his blindness, considering how it was caused, deserved no compassion ! that he was ungrateful and unjust ; that he complained

because no longer able to boast of his wickedness ; that he was brutally insolent, and guilty of falsehood ; yet calm and constant in his mind, and supported by the consciousness of merit ! He adds, that he was of no church, yet lived untainted by heresy ; and grew old without any visible worship, or hour of prayer, “ either solitary or with his household : omitting public prayers, he omitted all.” Who could know this ? Indeed, immediately afterwards, he corrects himself, and says, “ That he lived without prayer can hardly be affirmed, *his studies and meditations were an habitual prayer.*” What ! Milton, at whose frown hell grew darker ?

88. But enough of this, and to show that what has been said above, is intended to defend the poet, not to depreciate the biographer, the name of Johnson stands in the list of authors whose masterpieces, if the public afford encouragement, I hope to bring forward, edited with no less care and pains than the present volume, and introduced by Discourses, in which I shall at least endeavour to be just to the fame and merits of all.

NOTE.—From the narrative of Johnson the reader might infer, that on the return of Charles II., very little molestation of any kind was offered to Milton, whom, on the contrary, he represents as having been treated with particular tenderness, and allowed to pursue his “ studies, or his amusements, without persecution, molestation, or insult.” However, he admits that, on the 16th of June, 1660, “*an order was issued to seize Milton’s ‘ Defence,’ and Goodwin’s ‘ Obstructors of Justice,’ another book of the same tendency, and burn them by the common hangman.*” John-

son, I presume, had not read this *tender order*, which was not issued in June, but on the 13th of August, and printed the 15th, after his Majesty's *tenderness* had been vainly employed, during several months, in seeking for his victims, whom, at length, he describes as so obscure that they were not to be found! Such being the case, he bestows his "lenity" upon their books, as the reader will perceive by the following Proclamation.

BY THE KING.

A PROCLAMATION,

FOR calling in and suppressing of two books written by John Milton; the one entitled, *Johannis Miltoni Angli pro Populo Anglicano Defensio, contra Claudii Anonymi, alias Salmasii, Defensionem Regiam*; and the other in answer to a book, entitled, *The Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitude and Sufferings*. And also a book entitled, *The Obstructors of Justice*, written by John Goodwin.

CHARLES R.

WHEREAS, John Milton, late of Westminster, in the County of Middlesex, hath published in print two several books, the one entitled, *Johannis Miltoni Angli pro Populo Anglicano Defensio, contra Claudii Anonymi, alias Salmasii, Defensionem Regiam*. And the other in answer to a book entitled, *The Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitude and Sufferings*. In both which are contained sundry treasonable passages against us and our Government, and most impious endeavours to justify the horrid and unnatural murder of our late dear Father of Glorious Memory.

And whereas, John Goodwin, late of Coleman Street, London, Clerk, hath also published in print, a book entitled, *the Obstructors of Justice*, written in Defence of his said late Majesty.* And whereas the said John Milton and John Goodwin are both fled, or *so obscure themselves*, that *no endeavours* used for their apprehension can take effect, whereby they might be brought to legal tryal, and *deservedly receive condign punishment* for their treasons and offences.

Now, to the end that our good subjects may not be corrupted in their judgments, with such wicked and traitorous principles, as are dispersed and scattered throughout the before-mentioned books, We, upon the motion of the Commons in Parliament now assembled, do hereby strictly charge and command, all and every person and persons whatsoever, who live in any City, Burrough, or Town Incorporate, within this our Kingdom of England, the Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick upon Tweed; in whose hands any of those books are, or hereafter shall be, that they, upon pain of our high displeasure, and the consequence thereof, do forthwith, upon publication of this our command, or within ten days immediately following, deliver or cause the same to be delivered, to the Mayor, Bailiffs, or other chief officer or Magistrate, in any of the said Cities, Burroughs, or Towns Incorporate, where such person or persons do live; or if living out of any City, Burrough, or Town Incorporate, then to the next Justice of Peace adjoining to his or their dwelling, or place of abode; or if living in either of Our Universities, then to the Vice-Chancellor of that University, where he or they do reside.

And in default of such voluntary delivery, which We do expect in observance of our said command, That then, and after the time before limited, expired, the

* There must here be some mistake in the Proclamation, but so it is printed.

said Chief Magistrate of all and every the said Cities, Burroughs, or Towns Incorporate, the Justices of the Peace in their several counties, and the Vice-Chancellors of Our said Universities respectively, are hereby commanded to seize and take, all and every the Books aforesaid, in whose hands or possession soever they shall be found, and certify the names of the Offenders unto Our Privy Council.

And We do hereby give special charge and command to the said Chief Magistrates, Justices of the Peace and Chancellors respectively, that they cause the said Books which shall be so brought unto any of their hands, or seized or taken as aforesaid, by virtue of this Our Proclamation, to be delivered to the respective Sheriffs of those counties, where they respectively live, the first and next assizes that shall after happen. And the said Sheriffs are hereby also required, in time of holding such assizes, to cause the same to be publickly burnt by the hand of the common hangman.

And We do further straightly charge and command, that no man hereafter presume to print, sell, or disperse any the aforesaid books, upon pain of our heavy displeasure, and of such further punishment, as for their presumption in that behalf, may any way be inflicted upon them by the laws of this Realm.

[Given at Our Court at Whitehall, the 13th day of August,
in the twelfth year of Our Reign, 1660.]

In obedience to this order of the libertine despot, “several copies” of the proscribed books, as Mr. Mitford observes, were committed to the flames on the 27th of August, and on the 29th the Act of indemnity passed. Notwithstanding this, however, Milton lived in perpetual terror of being assassinated ; and well he might, remembering he was in the hands of those who had murdered Dorislas, and three other public functionaries, in the discharge of their duties abroad. In the British Museum is preserved an incomplete printed list of those murdered men, and Milton’s name is added, probably to incite some loyal subject to augment the number of the victims. Dr. Symmons has quoted from Richardson a copy of verses, written perhaps by some poet of Whitehall, “Upon John Milton’s not suffering for his Traitorous Book when the Tryers were executed, 1660.”

“ That thou escaped’st that vengeance which o’ertook,
Milton, thy regicides, and thy own book,
Was clemency in Charles beyond compare :
And yet thy doom doth prove more grievous far—
Old, sickly, poor, stark blind, thou writ’st for bread ;
So, for to live, thou’d’st call Salmasius from the dead.”

He would, I believe, have called Salmasius from the dead, or died himself, rather than have been author of such trumpery verses. Nine years after his death, (1683,) twenty-seven propositions from the writings of Milton, Hobbes, Buchanan, &c., were burnt at Oxford, says Mr. Mitford, as destructive to

church and state. This transaction, he continues, is celebrated in *Musæ Anglicanae*, called *Decretum Oxoniense*, vol. iii. p. 180.

—————“Si similis quicunque hæc scripsiterit auctor,
Fato succubuisse, eodemque arserit igne :
In mediâ vides flammâ erpitante cremari
Miltonum cœlo terrisque inæmabile nomen.”

They would no doubt have liked to roast the old man at Oxford, as a person whose name was hateful to heaven and earth. In the “*Vindiciae Carolinæ*, or a Defence of Eikon Basiliké,” published in 1692, we are told that “this Milton (the gall and bitterness of whose heart had so taken away his taste and judgment, that to write and be scurrilous were the same with him) is dead, 'tis true, and should have been forgotten by me, but that in this new impression he yet speaketh.” And will speak in repeated *impressions*, when his petty adversaries are buried in merited oblivion. The author admits that Milton “was a person of a large thought, and wanted not words to express those *conceptions*; but never so truly, as when the argument and *his depraved temper* met together: witness his ‘*Paradise Lost*,’ where he makes the devil—who, though fallen, had not given heaven for lost—speak *at that rate himself would have done of the son of this royal Martyr*, (upon his restoration,) had he thought it convenient; when in his ‘*Paradise Regained*,’ he is *so indifferent, poor, and starvling, as if he never expected any benefit by it!*”—No! he was condemned to *another place* by the charity of the royalists. This obscure defence of the “king’s book,” as it was called, was written upon the reprinting of the “*Defence of the People of England*,” at Amsterdam.

In 1698, the earliest complete edition of Milton’s Historical, Political, and Miscellaneous Works, with a life of the author, was published in Holland by J. Toland, in 3 vols. folio. Next year the Life was printed separately in London. Milton’s Letters of State, from 1649 to 1659, with an account of his life, and catalogue of his works, had appeared in London 1694, no doubt by the care of Toland. No second edition of the complete works was called for during thirty-five years; when, in 1733, they were published, with a new life by Dr. Birch; who, twenty years afterwards, brought them out in quarto. Fifty-one years then elapsed,—from 1753 to 1804,—before a new edition of

Milton's prose works again appeared. The latter year is the date of the edition of Dr. Symmons, who prefixed a life, which has since been separately reprinted. Then ensued another interval of thirty years, when, in 1834, the whole of the Prose Works were reprinted in one large and elegant volume, with an able introductory essay by Mr. Robert Fletcher, who deserves well of every admirer of Milton. From this account it would appear that, upon an average, an edition of Milton's complete works has been called for, from 1698 to the present day, once in a little more than twenty-seven years.

ACCOUNT
OF
HIS OWN STUDIES.

FIRST PUBLISHED 1641.

RETURNING to England from his travels on the continent, Milton found the whole nation agitated by what has been called Charles the First's episcopal war against the Scots, the direct tendency of which was to render the Government and the Church of England unpopular. In the Parliament, likewise, a feeling unfavourable to episcopacy was springing up; for, as Milton phrases it, "they had begun to humble the pride of the bishops." He saw the public approaching his own views of government, both in Church and State; and to advance the "good cause" took up the defence of Presbytery, as more consistent, in his opinion, with those popular political institutions which it was his earnest desire to see established. Of his conduct and motives he has himself supplied the history in the Second Defence of the People of England; and, since no one can hope to better them, we shall give in his own words the origin of his controversial writings, of which the Account of his own Studies forms a part. "When the liberty of speech was no longer subject to control, all mouths began to be opened against the bishops, some complaining of the vices of the individuals, others of those of the order. They said it was unjust that they alone should differ from the model of other reformed churches; that the government of the church should be according to the pattern of other churches, and particularly the word of God. This awakened all my attention and my zeal. I saw that a way was opening for the establishment of real liberty; that the foundation was laying for the deliverance of man from the yoke of slavery and superstition; that the principles of religion which were the first objects of our care, would exert a salutary influence on the manners and constitution of the republic; and as I had from my youth studied the distinction between religious and civil rights, I perceived that if I ever wished to be of use, I ought at least not to be wanting to my country, to the church, and so many of my fellow-christians, in a crisis of so much danger; I therefore determined to relinquish the other pursuits in which I was engaged, and to transfer the whole force of my talents and my industry to this one important object. I accordingly wrote two books to a friend concerning the reformation of the church of England. Afterwards, when two bishops of superior distinction, vindicated their privileges against some principal ministers, I thought that on these topics, to the consideration of which I was led solely by my love of truth, and my reverence for Christianity, I should not probably write worse than those who were contending only for their own emolument and usurpations. I therefore answered the one in two books, of which the first is inscribed Concerning Prelatical Episcopacy, and the other Concerning the Mode of Ecclesiastical Government; and I replied to the other in some Animadversions, and soon afterwards in an Apology. On this occasion it was supposed that I brought a timely succour to the ministers, who were hardly a match for the eloquence of their opponents; and from that time I was actively employed in refuting any answers that appeared."

ACCOUNT
OF
HIS OWN STUDIES.¹

1. How happy were it for this frail, and, as it may be called, mortal life of man, (since all earthly things which have the name of good and convenient in our daily use are withal so cumbersome and full of trouble,) if knowledge, yet which is the best and lightest possession of the mind, were, as the common saying is, no burden; and that what it wanted of being a load to any part of the body, it did not with a heavy advantage overlay upon the spirit! For not to speak of that knowledge that rests in the contemplation of natural causes and dimensions, which must needs be a lower wisdom, as the object is low, certain it is, that he who hath obtained in more than the scantiest measure to know any thing distinctly of God,

(¹) In order to present the reader with something like a complete view of Milton's ideas of Poetry, as well as of his reasons for quitting the study of it to engage for a while in Controversy, we here introduce the Preface to the second book of Church Government; which, in reality, is a separate piece, or has but little necessary connexion with any thing preceding or following it in the work to which it belongs.

and of his true worship, and what is infallibly good and happy in the state of man's life, what in itself evil and miserable, though vulgarly not so esteemed ; he that hath obtained to know this, the only high valuable wisdom indeed, remembering also that God, even to a strictness, requires the improvement of these his entrusted gifts, cannot but sustain a sorer burden of mind, and more pressing, than any supportable toil or weight which the body can labour under, how and in what manner he shall dispose and employ those sums of knowledge and illumination which God hath sent him into this world to trade with.

2. And that which aggravates the burden more, is, that, having received amongst his allotted parcels, certain precious truths, of such an orient lustre as no diamond can equal ; which nevertheless he has in charge to put off at any cheap rate, yea, for nothing to them that will ; the great merchants of this world, fearing that this course would soon discover and disgrace the false glitter of their deceitful wares, wherewith they abuse the people, like poor Indians, with beads and glasses, practise by all means how they may suppress the vending of such rarities, and at such a cheapness as would undo them, and turn their trash upon their hands. Therefore by gratifying the corrupt desires of men in fleshly doctrines, they stir them up to persecute with hatred and contempt all those that seek to bear themselves uprightly in this their spiritual factory : which they foreseeing, though they cannot but testify of truth, and the excellency of that heavenly

traffic which they bring, against what opposition or danger soever, yet needs must it sit heavily upon their spirits, that, being in God's prime intention, and their own, selected heralds of peace, and dispensers of treasure inestimable, without price to them that have no peace, they find in the discharge of their commission, that they are made the greatest variance and offence, a very sword and fire both in house and city over the whole earth. This is that which the sad prophet Jeremiah laments : ' Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me, a man of strife and contention ! '

3. And although divine inspiration must certainly have been sweet to those ancient prophets, yet the irksomeness of that truth which they brought was so unpleasant unto them, that everywhere they call it a burden. Yea, that mysterious book of revelation, which the great evangelist was bid to eat, as it had been some eye-brightening electuary of knowledge and foresight, though it were sweet in his mouth, and in the learning, it was bitter in his belly, bitter in the denouncing. Nor was this hid from the wise poet Sophocles, who in that place of his tragedy, where Tiresias is called to resolve king Oedipus in a matter which he knew would be grievous, brings him in bemoaning his lot, that he knew more than other men. For surely to every good and peaceable man, it must in nature needs be a hateful thing to be the displeaser and molester of thousands ; much better would it like him doubtless to be the messenger of gladness and contentment, which is his chief intended busi-

ness to all mankind, but that they resist and oppose their own true happiness.

4. But when God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say, or what he shall conceal. If he shall think to be silent as Jeremiah did, because of the reproach and derision he met with daily, 'and all his familiar friends watched for his halting,' to be revenged on him for speaking the truth, he would be forced to confess as he confessed; 'his word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary with forbearing and could not stay.' Which might teach these times not suddenly to condemn all things that are sharply spoken or vehemently written as proceeding out of stomach, virulence, and ill nature; but to consider rather, that if the prelates have leave to say the worst that can be said, or do the worst that can be done, while they strive to keep to themselves, to their great pleasure and commodity, those things which they ought to render up, no man can be justly offended with him that shall endeavour to impart and bestow, without any gain to himself, those sharp and saving words which would be a terror and a torment in him to keep back.

5. For me, I have determined to lay up as the best treasure and solace of a good old age, if God vouchsafe it me, the honest liberty of free speech from my youth, where I shall think it available in so dear a concernment as the church's good. For if I be, either by disposition or what other cause,

too inquisitive, or suspicious of myself and mine own doings, who can help it? But this I foresee, that should the church be brought under heavy oppression, and God have given me ability the while to reason against that man that should be the author of so foul a deed; or should she, by blessing from above on the industry and courage of faithful men, change this her distracted estate into better days, without the least furtherance or contribution of those few talents, which God at that present had lent me; I foresee what stories I should hear within myself, all my life after, of dis- courage and reproach. Timorous and ungrateful, the church of God is now again at the foot of her insulting enemies, and thou bewailest; what mat- ters it for thee, or thy bewailing? When time was, thou couldst not find a syllable of all that thou hast read, or studied, to utter in her behalfe. Yet ease and leisure was given thee for thy retired thoughts, out of the sweat of other men. Thou hast the diligence, the parts, the language of a man, if a vain subject were to be adorned or beautified; but when the cause of God and his church was to be pleaded, for which purpose that tongue was given thee which thou hast, God listened if he could hear thy voice among his zealous servants, but thou wert dumb as a beast; from henceforward be that which thine own brutish silence hath made thee. Or else I should have heard on the other ear; slothful, and ever to be set light by, the church hath now overcome her late distresses after the un- wearied labours of many her true servants that

stood up in her defence ; thou also wouldest take upon thee to share amongst them of their joy : but wherefore thou ? Where canst thou show any word or deed of thine which might have hastened her peace ? Whatever thou dost now talk, or write, or look, is the alms of other men's active prudence and zeal. Dare not now to say or do any thing better than thy former sloth and infancy ; or if thou darest, thou dost impudently to make a thrifty purchase of boldness to thyself, out of the painful merits of other men ; what before was thy sin is now thy duty, to be abject and worthless.

6. These, and such like lessons as these, I know would have been my matins duly, and my even-song. But now by this little diligence, mark what a privilege I have gained with good men and saints, to claim my right of lamenting the tribulations of the church, if she should suffer, when others, that have ventured nothing for her sake, have not the honour to be admitted mourners. But if she lift up her drooping head and prosper, among those that have something more than wished her welfare, I have my charter and freehold of rejoicing to me and my heirs. Concerning, therefore, this wayward subject against prelacy, the touching whereof is so distasteful and disquietous to a number of men, as by what hath been said I may deserve of charitable readers to be credited, that neither envy nor gall hath entered me upon this controversy, but the enforcement of conscience only, and a preventive fear lest the omitting of this duty should be against me, when I would store up to myself the

good provision of peaceful hours: so, lest it should be still imputed to me, as I have found it hath been, that some self-pleasing humour of vain-glory hath incited me to contest with men of high estimation, now while green years are upon my head; from this needless surmisal I shall hope to dissuade the intelligent and equal auditor, if I can but say successfully that which in this exigent behoves me; although I would be heard only, if it might be, by the elegant and learned reader, to whom principally for a while I shall beg leave I may address myself. To him it will be no new thing, though I tell him that if I hunted after praise, by the ostentation of wit and learning, I should not write thus out of mine own season when I have neither yet completed to my mind the full circle of my private studies, although I complain not of any insufficiency to the matter in hand; or were I ready to my wishes, it were a folly to commit any thing elaborately composed to the careless and interrupted listening of these tumultuous times.

7. Next, if I were wise only to my own ends, I would certainly take such a subject as of itself might catch applause, whereas this hath all the disadvantages on the contrary, and such a subject as the publishing whereof might be delayed at pleasure, and time enough to pencil it over with all the curious touches of art, even to the perfection of a faultless picture; wheras in this argument the not deferring is of great moment to the good speeding, that if solidity have leisure to do her office, art cannot have much. Lastly, I should

not choose this manner of writing, wherein knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of nature to another task, I have the use, as I may account, but of my left hand. And though I shall be foolish in saying more to this purpose, yet, since it will be such a folly, as wisest men go about to commit, having only confessed and so committed, I may trust with more reason, because with more folly, to have courteous pardon. For although a poet, soaring in the high reason of his fancies, with his garland and singing robes about him, might, without apology, speak more of himself than I mean to do; yet for me sitting here below in the cool element of prose, a mortal thing among many readers of no empyreal conceit, to venture and divulge unusual things of myself, I shall petition to the gentler sort, it may not be envy to me.

8. I must say therefore, that after I had for my first years, by the ceaseless diligence and care of my father, (whom God recompense!) been exercised to the tongues, and some sciences, as my age would suffer, by sundry masters and teachers both at home and at the schools, it was found, that whether aught was imposed me by them that had the overlooking, or betaken to of mine own choice in English, or other tongue, prosing or versing, but chiefly this latter, the style, by certain vital signs it had, was likely to live. But much latelier in the private academies of Italy, whither I was favoured to resort, perceiving that some trifles which I had in memory, composed at under twenty or

thereabout, (for the manner is, that every one must give some proof of his wit and reading there,) met with acceptance above what was looked for ; and other things, which I had shifted in scarcity of books and conveniences to patch up amongst them, were received with written encomiums, which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the Alps ; I began thus far to assent both to them and divers of my friends here at home, and not less to an inward prompting which now grew daily upon me, that by labour and intense study, (which I take to be my portion in this life,) joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to after-times, as they should not willingly let it die.

9. These thoughts at once possessed me, and these other ; that if I were certain to write as men buy leases, for three lives and downward, there ought no regard be sooner had than to God's glory, by the honour and instruction of my country. For which cause, and not only for that I knew it would be hard to arrive at the second rank among the Latins, I applied myself to that resolution, which Ariosto followed against the persuasions of Bembo, to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue ; not to make verbal curiosities the end, (that were a toilsome vanity,) but to be an interpreter and relater of the best and sagest things, among mine own citizens throughout this island in the mother dialect. That what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those

Hebrews of old did for their country, I, in my proportion, with this over and above, of being a Christian, might do for mine; not caring to be once named abroad, though perhaps I could attain to that, but content with these British islands as my world; whose fortune hath hitherto been, that if the Athenians, as some say, made their small deeds great and renowned by their eloquent writers, England bath had her noble achievements made small by the unskilful handling of monks and mechanics.

10. Time serves not now, and perhaps I might seem too profuse to give any certain account of what the mind at home, in the spacious circuits of her musing, hath liberty to propose to herself, though of highest hope and hardest attempting; whether that epic form whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso, are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief model: or whether the rules of Aristotle herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be followed, which in them that know art, and use judgment, is no transgression, but an enriching of art: and lastly, what king or knight, before the conquest, might be chosen in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian hero. And as Tasso gave to a prince of Italy his choice whether he would command him to write of Godfrey's expedition against the Infidels, or Belisarius against the Goths, or Charlemain against the Lombards; if to the instinct of nature and the emboldening of art aught may be trusted, and that there be nothing adverse in our climate, or the fate of this age,

it haply would be no rashness, from an equal diligence and inclination, to present the like offer in our own ancient stories ; or whether those dramatic constitutions, wherein Sophocles and Euripides reign, shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation.

11. The Scripture also affords us a divine pastoral drama in the Song of Solomon, consisting of two persons, and a double chorus, as Origen rightly judges. And the Apocalypse of St. John is the majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies : and this my opinion the grave authority of Paræus, commenting that book, is sufficient to confirm. Or if occasion shall lead, to imitate those magnific odes and hymns, wherein Pindarus and Callimachus are in most things worthy, some others in their frame judicious, in their matter most an end faulty. But those frequent songs throughout the law and prophets beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical art of composition, may be easily made appear over all the kinds of lyric poesy to be incomparable.

12. These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed, but yet to some (though most abuse) in every nation : and are of power, beside the office of a pulpit, to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right

tune; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almighty goodness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship.

13. Lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtleties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within; all these things with a solid and treatable smoothness to paint out and describe. Teaching over the whole book of sanctity and virtue, through all the instances of example, with such delight to those especially of soft and delicious temper, who will not so much as look upon truth herself, unless they see her elegantly dressed; that whereas the paths of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they will then appear to all men both easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed.

14. And what a benefit this would be to our youth and gentry, may be soon guessed by what we know of the corruption and bane, which they suck in daily from the writings and interludes of libidinous and ignorant poetasters, who having scarce ever heard of that which is the main con-

sistence of a true poem, the choice of such persons as they ought to introduce, and what is moral and decent to each one; do for the most part lay up vicious principles in sweet pills to be swallowed down, and make the taste of virtuous documents harsh and sour. But because the spirit of man cannot demean itself lively in this body, without some recreating intermission of labour and serious things, it were happy for the commonwealth, if our magistrates, as in those famous governments of old, would take into their care, not only the deciding of our contentious law-cases and brawls, but the managing of our public sports and festival pastimes; that they might be, not such as were authorized a while since, the provocations of drunkenness and lust, but such as may inure and harden our bodies by martial exercises to all warlike skill and performance; and may civilize, adorn, and make discreet our minds by the learned and affable meeting of frequent academies, and the procurement of wise and artful recitations, sweetened with eloquent and graceful enticements to the love and practice of justice, temperance, and fortitude, instructing and bettering the nation at all opportunities, that the call of wisdom and virtue may be heard every where, as Solomon saith; ‘ She crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, in the top of high places, in the chief concourse, and in the openings of the gates.’

15. Whether this may not be, not only in pulpits, but after another persuasive method, at set and solemn paneguries, in theatres, porches, or

what other place or way, may win most upon the people to receive at once both recreation and instruction; let them in authority consult. The thing which I had to say, and those intentions which have lived within me ever since I could conceive myself any thing worth to my country, I return to crave excuse that urgent reason hath plucked from me, by an abortive and foredated discovery. And the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above man's to promise; but that none hath by more studious ways endeavoured, and with more unwearied spirit that none shall, that I dare almost aver of myself, as far as life and free leisure will extend; and that the land had once enfranchised herself from this impertinent yoke of prelacy, under whose inquisitorious and tyrannical duncery, no free and splendid wit can flourish.

16. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader, that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine; like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite; nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame memory and her syren daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added industrious and

select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compassed, at mine own peril and cost, I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loath to hazard so much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them.

17. Although it nothing content me to have disclosed thus much beforehand, but that I trust hereby to make it manifest with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies, to come into the dim reflection of hollow antiquities sold by the seeming bulk, and there be fain to club quotations with men whose learning and belief lies in marginal stuffings; who, when they have, like good sumpters, laid ye down their horse-loads of citations and fathers at your door, with a rhapsody of who and who were bishops here or there, ye may take off their packsaddles, their day's work is done, and episcopacy, as they think, stoutly vindicated.

18. Let any gentle apprehension, that can distinguish learned pains from unlearned drudgery, imagine what pleasure or profoundness can be in this, or what honour to deal against such adversaries. But were it the meanest under-service, if

God by his secretary conscience enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back; for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help, ease, and lighten the difficult labours of the church, to whose service, by the intentions of my parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and in mine own resolutions: till coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which, unless he took with a conscience that would retch, he must either straight perjure, or split his faith; I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing. Howsoever thus church-outed by the prelates, hence may appear the right I have to meddle in these matters, as before the necessity and constraint appeared.

APOLOGY

FOR HIS

EARLY LIFE AND WRITINGS.

FIRST PUBLISHED 1640.

MILTON's successive attacks upon the bishops, distinguished for their rough and vehement eloquence, naturally raised against him a multitude of enemies, whose rage and bitterness knew no bounds. Eloquence, however, was not, as Mr. Mitford* pretends, all he had to throw into the controversy, for his learning and logic were equally remarkable; but whatever were the talents or qualifications he brought to bear upon the question, he was pretty generally at the time, and tacitly even by his enemies, acknowledged to have come off triumphantly in the struggle, for, instead of opposing his arguments with arguments, they had recourse to calumny. Several of his friends, also, who had written on the side of Presbytery, were overwhelmed with obloquy; particularly those five ministers, to whose talents and learning one of the ablest of Milton's biographers bears honourable testimony. "But the piece which seems most to have attracted the public attention," says he, "was a pamphlet, written by the united powers of five of the Presbyterian divines, under the appellation of SMECTY MNUS, a word formed with the initial letters of the names of the authors, Stephen Marshal, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow. Upon the publication of this work, in which every thing unfavourable to episcopacy that the learning of its authors could supply was brought forward, Bishop Hall replied in his Defence of the Remonstrance," &c. "Milton's formidable pen," as Dr. Symmons very justly denominates it, "was now once more drawn in angry opposition to the prelate;" and his Animadversions on the Remonstrant's Defence, thrown into the form of dialogue, in which his adversary's book is made to sustain the part of an interlocutor, in order the more completely to overthrow and demolish it, may be regarded as one of the fiercest and least agreeable of his earlier controversial works. He who enters into controversy of any kind can seldom foresee how much it must consume of his time, or to what lengths he shall be led. Milton probably expected and wished to pause here. But an author, supposed to be the son of Bishop Hall, and in Milton's opinion, assisted by his father, appearing

* "The fact was," says this learned and generally unprejudiced writer, "the Puritans were totally unable to compete with such men as Usher, Hall, Bramhall, and others of the established religion, in theological learning, and knowledge of ecclesiastical history, as may be seen by reading the controversy; and they were glad even of Milton's eloquence—for that was all he brought them; and all the young scholar could be expected to bring."—*Life of Milton*, &c. p. xxxi, note 43. This "young scholar" was thirty-three; and his writings of this period exhibit a degree of knowledge and research, of which many an older scholar, whether laic or clerk, might be justly proud.

with what he was pleased to call a Modest Confutation, &c. it became necessary he should once more enter into the contest; and the Modest Confutation was met by the Apology for Smectymnuus, which, relating almost entirely to himself, I have now ventured to denominate an Apology for his Early Life and Writings, not from any desire of meddling with what Milton has written, but in the hope of rendering the epigraph more suitable to the taste of the present times.

In whatever regards the Church, or the government of the Church, I am willing to respect the opinions of its learned and able ministers; but, in the present case, I can by no means agree with Mr. Atford, that Milton, "as well as his brethren whom he defended, were infinitely inferior to Bishop Hall in theological learning and in controversial skill;" or that the "learned prelate's victory over *Smectymnus*" was complete." On the contrary, on whatever side right and justice may have been,—for that is a very different question,—victory was undoubtedly on the side of Milton; since it was the part of the vanquished and downfallen, who could no longer help themselves, to invoke the aid of the evil and furious passions of mankind, to excite their bigotry and fanaticism, and call, since they found the magistrate deaf, upon the people, whom they customarily disparaged, to support their cause by persecution, and avenge them by stoning their antagonist, "as a miscreant, whose impunity would be their crime." When such were the temper and conduct of his opponents, "we cannot reasonably wonder," says Dr. Symmons, "at the warmth of his expressions, or at the little scruple with which he scattered his various instruments of pain."† But we may well wonder that out of a gladiatorial controversy of this sanguinary kind, any thing should have arisen so richly teeming with beautiful thoughts, so full of youthful and cheering reminiscences, so varied, so polished, so vehemently eloquent, as the Apology for his Early Life and Writings, which, as a noble and justifiable burst of egotism, has never, perhaps, in any language been excelled.

* Life of Milton, p. xxxiv. Why this writer chooses to be wrong in the orthography of this celebrated name is more than I can explain; but it is no slip of the pen, for in page xxxi he says that the W in William Spurstow's name must be pronounced U to form the word. Now he is the only author I remember to have met with who has written the name with one U. Both the ministers themselves and Milton invariably have *Smectymnuus*, where the W is resolved into its proper elements. Dr. Sumner, perhaps by a typographical error, is made to say there were *six* divines engaged in the composition of the pamphlet; (*Pref. to Christian Doctrine, &c.* p. xix;) but this is certainly a mistake.

† Life of Milton, p. 240.

APOLOGY

FOR HIS

EARLY LIFE AND WRITINGS.¹

1. IF, readers, to that same great difficulty of well-doing what we certainly know, were not added in most men as great a carelessness of knowing what they and others ought to do, we had been long ere this, no doubt but all of us, much farther on our way to some degree of peace and happiness in this kingdom. But since our sinful neglect of practising that which we know to be undoubtedly true and good, hath brought forth among us, through God's just anger, so great a difficulty now to know that which otherwise might be soon learnt, and hath divided us by a controversy of great importance indeed, but of no hard solution, which is the more our punishment; I resolved (of what small moment soever I might be thought) to stand on that side where I saw both the plain authority of Scripture leading, and the reason of justice and equity persuading; with this opinion, which esteems it more unlike a Christian to be a cold neuter

(¹) Hitherto denominated "An Apology for Smectymnuus."

in the cause of the church, than the law of Solon (²) made it punishable after a sedition in the state.

2. And because I observe that fear and dull disposition, lukewarmness and sloth, are not seldomer wont to cloak themselves under the affected name of moderation, than true and lively zeal is customably disparaged with the term of indiscretion, bitterness, and choler; I could not to my thinking honour a good cause more from the heart, than by defending it earnestly, as oft as I could judge it to behove me, notwithstanding any false name that could be invented to wrong or undervalue an honest meaning. Wherein although I have not doubted to single forth more than once such of them as were thought the chief and most nominated opposers on the other side, whom no man else undertook; if I have done well either to be confident of the truth, whose force is best seen against the ablest resistance, or to be jealous and tender of the hurt that might be done among the weaker by the entrapping authority of great names titled to false opinions; or that it be lawful to attribute somewhat to gifts of God's imparting, which I boast not, but thankfully acknowledge,

(²) According to Suidas it was a law of Solon that he who stood neuter in any public sedition should be declared *ἄτιμος*, infamous; which law, Archbishop Potter observes, was enacted that every Athenian might be compelled to use his utmost endeavours in promoting the welfare of the commonwealth.—*Archæol. Græc.* i. 215. Dryden, with his usual vigour and coarseness, likewise condemns the selfish indifference of the man of no party:—

“ Damned neutrals, in their middle way of steering,
Are neither fish, nor flesh, nor good red herring.

and fear also lest at my certain account they be reckoned to me rather many than few ; or if lastly it be but justice not to defraud of due esteem the wearisome labours and studious watchings, wherein I have spent and tired out almost a whole youth, (³) I shall not distrust to be acquitted of presumption : knowing, that if heretofore all ages have received with favour and good acceptance the early industry of him that hath been hopeful, it were but hard measure now if the freedom of any timely spirit should be oppressed merely by the big and blunted fame of his elder adversary ; and that his sufficiency must be now sentenced, not by pondering the reason he shows, but by calculating the years he brings.

3. However, as my purpose is not, nor hath been

(³) In the introduction to the Second Book of the “ Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy,” above given, he had already, in a hurried manner, traced a sketch of his youthful studies, and partly disclosed the ambitious hopes which from the beginning filled his bosom. He was not content, whether in prose or verse, to occupy the second place, and meditated continually how he might rise to that eminence which he felt he ought to reach, by performing for England “ what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of old, did for their country.” Here also if we give Milton credit for knowing what was his own habitual practice, and being above unnecessary hypocrisy, we may discover a refutation of Dr. Johnson’s absurd assertion that he had abandoned the use of prayer : the power, he says, to accomplish the design above glanced at was not “ to be obtained by the invocation of dame memory and her syren daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases.”

formerly, to look on my adversary abroad, through the deceiving glass of other men's great opinion of him, but at home, where I may find him in the proper light of his own worth; so now against the rancour of an evil tongue, from which I never thought so absurdly, as that I of all men should be exempt, I must be forced to proceed from the unfeigned and diligent inquiry of my own conscience at home, (for better way I know not, readers,) to give a more true account of myself abroad than this modest confuter, as he calls himself, hath given of me. Albeit, that in doing this I shall be sensible of two things which to me will be nothing pleasant; the one is, that not unlikely I shall be thought too much a party in mine own cause, and therein to see least: the other, that I shall be put unwillingly to molest the public view with the vindication of a private name; as if it were worth the while that the people should care whether such a one were thus, or thus. Yet those I entreat who have found the leisure to read that name, however of small repute, unworthily defamed, would be so good and so patient as to hear the same person not unneedfully defended.

4. I will not deny but that the best apology against false accusers is silence and sufferance, and honest deeds set against dishonest words. And that I could at this time most easily and securely, with the least loss of reputation, use no other defence, I need not despair to win belief; whether I consider both the foolish contriving and ridiculous aiming of these his slanderous bolts, shot so wide

of any suspicion to be fastened on me, that I have oft with inward contentment perceived my friends congratulating themselves in my innocence, and my enemies ashamed of their partner's folly: or whether I look at these present times, wherein most men, now scarce permitted the liberty to think over their own concerns, have removed the seat of their thoughts more outward to the expectation of public events: or whether the examples of men, either noble or religious, who have sat down lately with a meek silence and sufferance under many libellous endorsements, may be a rule to others, I might well appease myself to put up any reproaches in such an honourable society of fellow-sufferers, using no other defence.

5. And were it that slander would be content to make an end where it first fixes, and not seek to cast out the like infamy upon each thing that hath but any relation to the person traduced, I should have pleaded against this confuter by no other advocates than those which I first commended, silence and sufferance, and speaking deeds against faltering words. But when I discerned his intent was not so much to smite at me, as through me to render odious the truth which I had written, and to stain with ignominy that evangelic doctrine which opposes the tradition of prelacy; I conceived myself to be now not as mine own person, but as a member incorporate into that truth whereof I was persuaded, and whereof I had declared openly to be a partaker. Whereupon I thought it my duty, if not to myself, yet to the religious

cause I had in hand,(⁴) not to leave on my garment the least spot or blemish in good name, so long as God should give me to say that which might wipe it off. Lest those disgraces which I ought to suffer, if it so befall me, for my religion, through my default religion be made liable to

(⁴) Egotism is viewed by different persons in very different lights. Contemporaries, and generally all individuals of a vain and conceited character, are offended when an author is compelled by circumstances to speak with due confidence of himself. Their vanity is shocked; a comparison seems to be tacitly instituted between them and the speaker; and their irritation is exactly proportioned to their consciousness of littleness. On the contrary, men of genius love, almost above all things, to meet, in a writer, with such casual bursts of involuntary or extorted confessions, which seem to open the breast, and let in a momentary light on the secret machinery of the soul. Montaigne (*Essais*, l. iii. ch. 8) who practised what in theory he approved, experienced considerable ill humour on finding Tacitus, in his *Annals*, (l. xi. ch. 11,) apologizing for making an allusion to himself. He admired far more the boldness of Cicero, who never hesitated to put forward his own claims to commendation. But Tacitus had looked further into human nature than either the one or the other; and knew that, though to the judicious few he might afford pleasure, he would be sure to rouse the evil feelings of the many. Aristotle accordingly delivers it as a precept of art, that whether in speaking or writing, a show of great modesty is to be preserved, by which the judges will be propitiated, and thus, perhaps, be led to decide in our favour. Never was this rule more wisely observed than by Milton in this passage, where being about to exalt his own character at the expense of his opponent, he argues against the propriety of molesting the public with the vindication of a private name; adding, that for himself the best apology would have been silence and the testimony of a virtuous life; but that, since a blow had been aimed at truth through him, and his feigned vices made a reproach to his cause, he was no longer at liberty to view the matter as an individual sufferer, but must defend his own conduct for the sake of the religion he professed.

suffer for me. And, whether it might not something reflect upon those reverent men, whose friend I may be thought in writing the Animadversions, was not my last care to consider; if I should rest under these reproaches, having the same common adversary with them, it might be counted small credit for their cause to have found such an assistant, as this babbler hath devised me. What other thing in his book there is of dispute or question, in answering thereto I doubt not to be justified; except there be who will condemn me to have wasted time in throwing down that which could not keep itself up. As for others, who notwithstanding what I can allege have yet decreed to misinterpret the intents of my reply, I suppose they would have found as many causes to have misconceived the reasons of my silence.

6. To begin therefore an apology for those Animadversions, which I wrote against the Remonstrant in defence of Smectymnuus; since the preface, which was purposely set before them, is not thought apologetical enough, it will be best to acquaint ye, readers, before other things, what the meaning was to write them in that manner which I did. For I do not look to be asked wherefore I wrote the book, it being no difficulty to answer, that I did it to those ends which the best men propose to themselves when they write: but wherefore in that manner, neglecting the main bulk of all that specious antiquity, which might stun children, and not men, I chose rather to observe some kind of

military advantages to await him at his foragings, at his waterings, and whenever he felt himself secure, to solace his vein in derision of his more serious opponents.

7. And here let me have pardon, readers, if the remembrance of that which he hath licensed himself to utter contemptuously of those reverend men, provoke me to do that over again, which some expect I should excuse as too freely done; since I have two provocations—his latest insulting in his short answer, and their final patience. I had no fear, but that the authors of *Smectymnuus*, to all the show of solidity, which the Remonstrant could bring, were prepared both with skill and purpose to return a sufficing answer, and were able enough to lay the dust and pudder in antiquity, which he and his, out of stratagem, are wont to raise. But when I saw his weak arguments headed with sharp taunts, and that his design was, if he could not refute them, yet at least with quips and snapping adages to vapour them out, which they, bent only upon the business, were minded to let pass; by how much I saw them taking little thought for their own injuries, I must confess I took it as my part the less to endure that my respected friends, through their own unnecessary patience, should thus lie at the mercy of a coy flirting style; to be girded with frumps and curtal gibes, by one who makes sentences by the statute, as if all above three inches long were confiscate. To me it seemed an indignity, that whom his whole wisdom could not move from their place, them his impetuous folly

should presume to ride over. And if I were more warm than was meet in any passage of that book, which yet I do not yield, I might use therein the patronage of no worse an author than Gregory Nyssen, who mentioning his sharpness against Eunomius in the defence of his brother Basil, holds himself irreprovable in that “it was not for himself, but in the cause of his brother; and in such cases,” saith he, “perhaps it is worthier pardon to be angry than to be cooler.”

8. And whereas this confuter taxes the whole discourse of levity, I shall show ye, readers, wheresoever it shall be objected in particular, that I have answered with as little lightness as the Remonstrant hath given example. I have not been so light as the palm of a bishop, which is the lightest thing in the world when he brings out his book of ordination : for then, contrary to that which is wont in releasing out of prison, any one that will pay his fees is laid hands on. Another reason, it would not be amiss though the Remonstrant were told, wherefore he was in that unusual manner beleaguered ; and this was it, to pluck out of the heads of his admirers the conceit that all who are not prelatrical, are gross-headed, thick-witted, illiterate, shallow. Can nothing then but episcopacy teach men to speak good English, to pick and order a set of words judiciously ? Must we learn from canons and quaint sermonings, interlined with barbarous Latin, to illumine a period, to wreath an enthymema with masterous dexterity ? I rather incline, as I have heard it observed, that a Jesuit’s

Italian when he writes, is ever naught, though he be born and bred a Florentine, so to think, that from like causes we may go near to observe the same in the style of a prelate.

9. For doubtless that indeed according to art is most eloquent, which turns and approaches nearest to nature from whence it came ; and they express nature best, who in their lives least wander from her safe leading, which may be called regenerate reason. So that how he should be truly eloquent who is not withal a good man, I see not.⁽⁵⁾ Nevertheless, as oft as is to be dealt with men who pride themselves in their supposed art, to leave them inexcusable wherein they will not be bettered ; there be of those that esteem prelacy a figment, who yet can pipe if they can dance, nor will be unfurnished to show, that what the prelates admire and have not, others have and admire not. The knowledge whereof, and not of that only, but

(5) Milton here alludes to the question, much debated among rhetoricians, whether an orator can attain to the highest reaches of his art without virtue ; and he decides it in the negative. Aristotle, who saw what men of imperfect moral habits had, both at Athens and elsewhere, been able to effect by mere force of art, seems to admit a different conclusion ; but at the same time maintains that the appearance of virtue carries along with it great weight, even when simply put on for the occasion, like the dress of a tragedian. This is yielding all that is demanded. For, if to give due force to their arguments even the vicious find it necessary to mimic virtue, he who in uttering noble sentiments has nothing but his heart to consult, who finds his habitual preferences marshalled on the side of what is good and honourable, will unquestionably, all other things being equal, possess a great advantage over the man who derives from others whatever he knows of great and heroic feelings.

of what the Scripture teacheth us how we ought to withstand the perverters of the gospel, were those other motives, which gave the Animadversions no leave to remit a continual vehemence throughout the book. For as in teaching doubtless the spirit of meekness is most powerful, so are the meek only fit persons to be taught: as for the proud, the obstinate, and false doctors of men's devices, be taught they will not, but discovered and laid open they must be.

10. For how can they admit of teaching, who have the condemnation of God already upon them for refusing divine instruction? That is, to be filled with their own devices, as in the Proverbs we may read: therefore we may safely imitate the method that God uses; "with the foward to be foward, and to throw scorn upon the scorner," whom, if any thing, nothing else will heal. And if the "righteous shall laugh at the destruction of the ungodly," they may also laugh at the pertinacious and incurable obstinacy, and at the same time be moved with detestation of their seducing malice, who employ all their wits to defend a prelacy usurped, and to deprave that just government, which pride and ambition, partly by fine fetches and pretences, partly by force, hath shoudered out of the church. And against such kind of deceivers openly and earnestly to protest, lest any one should be inquisitive wherefore this or that man is forwarder than others, let him know that this office goes not by age or youth, but to whomsoever God shall give apparently the will,

the spirit, and the utterance. (6) Ye have heard the reasons for which I thought not myself exempted from associating with good men in their labours towards the church's welfare; to which, if any one brought opposition, I brought my best resistance. If in requital of this, and for that I have not been negligent toward the reputation of my friends, I have gained a name bestuck, or as I may say, bedecked with the reproaches and reviles of this modest confuter; it shall be to me neither strange nor unwelcome, as that which could not come in a better time.

11. Having rendered an account what induced me to write those Animadversions in that manner as I writ them, I come now to see what the confu-

(6) The Puritans of Milton's age appear, in many instances, to have laid claim to immediate inspiration; but it is difficult to discover with clearness the nature of their ideas on the subject. Baxter, an eloquent and philosophical writer, observes:—"There is a great difference between that light which sheweth us the thing itself, and that artificial skill by which we have right notions, names, definitions, and formed arguments and answers to objections. This artificial, logical, organical kind of knowledge is good and useful in its kind, if right, like speech itself; but he that hath much of this may have little of the former; and unlearned persons, that have little of this, may have more of the former; and may have those inward perceptions of the verity of the promises and rewards of God, which they cannot bring forth into artificial reasonings to themselves or others; who are taught of God by the effective sort of teaching which reacheth the heart or will, as well as the understanding, and is a giving of what is taught, and a making us such as we are told we must be. And who findeth not need to pray hard for this effective teaching of God when he hath got all organical knowledge; and words and arguments in themselves most apt at his fingers' ends, as we say?"—*Dying Thoughts, in Sacred Classics*, vol. vi. p. 24, 25:

tation hath to say against them ; but so as the confuter shall hear first what I have to say against his confutation. And because he pretends to be a great conjector at other men by their writings, I will not fail to give ye, readers, a present taste of him from his title, hung out like a tolling sign-post to call passengers, not simply a confutation, but “a modest confutation,” with a laudatory of itself obtruded in the very first word. Whereas a modest title should only inform the buyer what the book contains without further insinuation ; this officious epithet so hastily assuming the modesty which others are to judge of by reading, not the author to anticipate to himself by forestalling, is a strong presumption that his modesty, set there to sale in the frontispiece, is not much addicted to blush. A surer sign of his lost shame he could not have given, than seeking thus unseasonably to prepossess men of his modesty. And seeing he hath neither kept his word in the sequel, nor omitted any kind of boldness in slandering, it is manifest his purpose was only to rub the forehead of his title with this word modest, that he might not want colour to be the more impudent throughout his whole confutation.

12. Next, what can equally savour of injustice and plain arrogance, as to prejudice and forecondemn his adversary in the title for “ slanderous and scurrilous,” and as the Remonstrant’s fashion is, for frivolous, tedious, and false, not staying till the reader can hear him proved so in the following discourse ? Which is one cause of a suspicion

that in setting forth this pamphlet the Remonstrant was not unconsulted with. (?) Thus his first address was “ An humble Remonstrance by a dutiful Son of the Church,” almost as if he had said, her White-boy. His next was, “ a Defence” (a wonder how it escaped some praising adjuncet) “ against the frivolous and false Exceptions of Smectymnuus,” sitting in the chair of his title-page upon his poor cast adversaries both as a judge and party, and that before the jury of readers can be impanelled. His last was “ A short Answer to a tedious Vindication ;” so little can he suffer a man to measure either with his eye or judgment, what is short or what tedious, without his preoccupying direction : and from hence is begotten this “ Modest Confutation against a slanderous and scurrilous Libel.”

13. I conceive, readers, much may be guessed at the man and his book, what depth there is, by the framing of his title ; which being in this Remonstrant so rash and unadvised as ye see, I con-

(?) Here his suspicions glance at Bishop Hall himself, whom he evidently supposes to have aided his son in concocting the “ Modest Confutation.” Dr. Symmons imagines that, “ had this work been published with the author’s name, its motives would probably have atoned with Milton for its virulence ; and his own filial piety, affected by the spectacle of a generous youth rushing to present his bosom to the wound intended for his father’s, would have spared the enemy ;” &c.—*Life of Milton*, p. 239. On the contrary, his contemptuous severity would more probably have been augmented by beholding the father encouraging his son to defend him by heaping, what Dr. Symmons acknowledges to have been “ enormous falsehoods,” on the head of his adversary.

ceit him to be near akin to him who set forth a passion sermon with a formal dedicatory in great letters to our Saviour. (8) Although I know that all we do ought to begin and end in his praise and glory, yet to inscribe him in a void place with flourishes, as a man in compliment uses to trick up the name of some esquire, gentleman, or lord paramount at common law, to be his book-patron, with the appendant form of a ceremonious presentment, will ever appear among the judicious to be but an insulse and frigid affectation. As no less was that before his book against the Brownists, to write a letter to a Prosopopœia, a certain rhetorized woman whom he calls mother, and complains of some that laid whoredom to her charge; and certainly had he folded his epistle with a superscription to be delivered to that female figure by any post or carrier, who were not an ubiquitary, it had been a most miraculous greeting. We find the primitive doctors, as oft as they wrote to churches, speaking to them as to a number of faithful brethren and sons; and not to make a cloudy transmigration of sexes in such a familiar way of writing as an epistle ought to be, leaving the tract of com-

(8) The man who did this was no other than Bishop Hall; and the discourse, with this extraordinary dedication, still occupies a place in his works. Though not printed till the year 1642, it was "preached at Paul's Cross on Good Friday, April 14, 1609." The dedication is conceived in the following words:—"To the only honour and glory of God, my dear and blessed Saviour, (which hath done and suffered all these things for my soul,) his weak and unworthy servant humbly desires to consecrate himself and his poor labours: beseeching him to accept and bless them to the public good, and to the praise of his own glorious name."

mon address, to run up, and tread the air in metaphorical compellations, and many fond utterances better let alone.

14. But I step again to this emblazoner of his title-page, (whether it be the same man or no, I leave it in the midst,) and here I find him pronouncing without reprieve, those animadversions to be a slanderous and scurrilous libel. To which I, readers, that they are neither slanderous, nor scurrilous, will answer in what place of his book he shall be found with reason, and not ink only, in his mouth. Nor can it be a libel more than his own, which is both nameless and full of slanders; and if in this that it freely speaks of things amiss in religion, but established by act of state, I see not how Wickliffe (⁹) and Luther, with all the first martyrs and reformers, could avoid the imputation of libelling. I never thought the human frailty of erring in cases of religion, infamy to a state, no more than to a council. It had therefore been nei-

(⁹) Wickliffe was regarded by Milton with particular veneration. He speaks of him in his various writings again and again, and always as the Prince of Reformers. In his first controversial work,—“Reformation in England,”—he describes Wickliffe’s preaching as the flame “at which all the succeeding reformers more effectually lighted their tapers.” Again, in his “Animadversions upon the Remonstrant’s Defence,” having dwelt on what seems to have been a favourite idea with him, viz. that the English were, in modern times, God’s chosen people;—“he knocked once and twice, and came again, opening our drowsy eyelids leisurely by that glimmering light, which Wickliffe and his followers dispersed;” and further on, in the same treatise, he adds:—“It may be denied that bishops were our first reformers, for Wickliffe was before them, and his egregious labours are not to be neglected.”

ther civil nor Christianly, to derogate the honour of the state for that cause, especially when I saw the parliament itself piously and magnanimously bent to supply and reform the defects and oversights of their forefathers ; which to the godly and repentant ages of the Jews were often matter of humble confessing and bewailing, not of confident asserting and maintaining. Of the state therefore I found good reason to speak all honourable things, and to join in petition with good men that petitioned : but against the prelates, who were the only seducers and misleaders of the state to constitute the government of the church not rightly, me thought I had not vehemence enough. And thus, readers, by the example which he hath set me, I have given ye two or three notes of him out of his title-page ; by which his firstlings fear not to guess boldly at his whole lump, for that guess will not fail ye ; and although I tell him keen truth, yet he may bear with me, since I am like to chase him into some good knowledge, and others, I trust, shall not mispend their leisure. For this my aim is, if I am forced to be unpleasing to him whose fault it is, I shall not forget at the same time to be useful in something to the stander-by.

15. As therefore he began in the title, so in the next leaf he makes it his first business to tamper with his reader by sycophanting, and misnaming the work of his adversary. He calls it “a mime thrust forth upon the stage, to make up the breaches of those solemn scenes between the prelates and the Smectymnuans.” Wherein while he is so over-

greedy to fix a name of ill sound upon another, note how stupid he is to expose himself or his own friends to the same ignominy ; likening those grave controversies to a piece of stagery, or scenework, where his own Remonstrant, whether in buskin or sock, must of all right be counted the chief player, be it boasting Thraso, or Davus that troubles all things, or one who can shift into any shape, I meddle not ; let him explicate who hath resembled the whole argument to a comedy, for “ tragical,” he says, “ were too ominous.” Nor yet doth he tell us what a mime is, whereof we have no pattern from ancient writers, except some fragments, which contain many acute and wise sentences. And this we know in Laertius, that the mimes of Sophron were of such reckoning with Plato, as to take them nightly to read on, and after make them his pillow. Scaliger describes a mime to be a poem imitating any action to stir up laughter.⁽¹⁰⁾

(¹⁰) On the nature of these Mimes the learned entertain very contradictory notions, some insisting they were written in verse, others in prose ; and others, again, willing to reconcile the contending parties, suggesting that they may have been a mixture of both. Valkenaer, in his edition of Ten Idylls of Theocritus, p. 200 ; and Casaubon, de Sat. Poët. c. iii. have entered minutely into the question. More recently, Müller, in his “ History and Antiquities of the Doric Race,” has collected and examined critically all the testimonies of ancient authors bearing directly on the subject. “ About half a century after Epicharmus, Sophron, the mimographer, made his appearance, who was the author of a new species of comedy, though in many respects resembling that of his predecessor. Still this variety of the drama differed so much, not only from that of Sicily, but from any other which existed in Greece, that its origin must, after all our attempts at

But this being neither poem, nor yet ridiculous, how is it but abusively taxed to be a mime? For if every book, which may by chance excite to laugh here and there, must be termed thus, then may the dialogues of Plato, who for those his writings hath obtained the surname of divine, be esteemed

explanation, remain involved in great obscurity. The mimes of Sophron had no accompaniment of music or dancing, and they were written not in verse, but in prose, though perhaps in certain rhythmical divisions. This latter circumstance seems quite singular, and without example in the Greek literature which has been transmitted to us. But that it was in reality so, seems improbable, when we remember that there would naturally be an intermediate rhythm, formed at the transition from the metrical to the prosaic style; and with the Dorians this would have taken the form of concise and disjointed sentences, a periodical style being more suited to the Athenians. We are led to this notion by the consideration of some remains of Lacedemonian composition, in which no one can fail to see the rhythmical form and symmetry of the sentences. Thus in the famous letter of Hippocrates :

*ἔρρει τὰ καλά. Μίνδαρος γ' ἀπεσσούα·
πεινῶντι τῶν ὄφες ἀποφεομέει τί χρὴ ἐρᾶν.*

and also in that of the Lacedemonian women, preserved by Plutarch,

*κακὰ τεῦ φάμα κακκέχυτας
ταύταις ἀπωθεῦ, η μη ἔσο,*

where the rhythm passes insensibly into verse; which is less strikingly the case in other instances.

“ Whether the mimes of Sophron were publicly represented or not, is a question not easily answered. It would however be singular, if a poetical work had been intended only for reading, at an age when every thing was written, not for the public eye but for the public ear. It is certainly more probable that these mimes were originally part of the amusements of certain festivals, as was the case with the Spartan *deicelictæ*, which they resembled more than any other variety of the drama. Indeed it can be easily conceived, that farces of this description acted

as they are by that detractor in Athenæus, no better than mimes: because there is scarce one of them, especially wherein some notable sophister lies sweating and turmoiling under the inevitable and merciless dilemmas of Socrates, but that he who reads, were it Saturn himself, would be often

by persons who had a quick perception of the eccentricities and peculiarities of mankind, and a talent for mimicry, should have existed among the Dorians of Sicily, as well as of Laconia, particularly as the former were celebrated for their imitative skill. Even Agathocles the tyrant excited the laughter, not merely of his guests and companions, but of whole assemblies of the people, by ridiculing certain known characters, in the manner of an ethologus, or merry-andrew. Accordingly, the mimes of Sophron, by which these rude attempts were improved, and raised to a regular species of the drama, were distinguished by their faithful imitation of manners, even of the vulgar; and the solecisms and rude dialect of the common people were copied with great exactness, and hence the numerous sayings and proverbs which were introduced. On the other hand, he was most skilful in seizing the more delicate shades and turns of feeling, and in preserving the unity and consistency of his characters, without which he would never have been so much admired by Plato, or the study of his works so serviceable in the composition of the Socratic dialogues, as we know on good authority to have been the case; and hence we should compare the scenery of Plato's dialogues with the poems of Theocritus, which we know to be imitated from the female mimes of Sophron, in order to obtain a proper idea of those masterpieces. His talent for description must however have been supported and directed by moral considerations; which probably preponderated rather in the serious (*μῆμοι σπουδαῖοι,*) and were less prominent in the common mimes (*μῆμοι γέλωτοι.*) The tribe of Aretalogi and Ethologi, who originally spoke much of virtue and morality but gradually sunk into mere buffoons, appears to have come from Sicily, and was, perhaps through several intermediate links, connected with Sophron.

“ In considering these philosophical sports, which mingled in the same breath the grave and solemn lessons of philosophy and

robbed of more than a smile. And whereas he tells us, that “scurrilous Mime was a personated grim lowering fool,” his foolish language unwittingly writes fool upon his own friend, for he who was there personated was only the Remonstrant; the author is ever distinguished from the person he introduces.

16. But in an ill hour hath this unfortunate rashness stumbled upon the mention of miming, that he might at length cease, which he hath not yet since he stepped in, to gall and hurt him whom he would aid. Could he not beware, could he not bethink him, was he so uncircumspect as not to foresee, that no sooner would that word mime be set eye on in the paper, but it would bring to mind that wretched pilgrimage over Minsheu’s dictionary (¹¹) called “Mundus alter et idem,” the

the most ludicrous mimicry and buffoonery, we may perhaps find a reason why Persius, a youth educated in the Stoic sect, should have thought of making Sophron the model of his satires. This statement is given by a late, but in this instance a credible writer, and is confirmed by the dramatic character of the Satires of Persius, and the constant use of mimicry in them, particularly the first four; so much so indeed, that a study of Persius is the best method of forming an accurate and lively idea of the mimes of Sophron.”—*Vol. ii. p. 371—374.*

(¹¹) This is a bitter satire on Bishop Hall’s Latin romance entitled “Mundus Alter et Idem,” said, on the title-page, to have been printed at Utrecht, by Johannis à Waesberg, in 1643. The frontispiece represents a company of coarse revellers at a feast, an apt illustration of the book, which is a satire on gluttony, drunkenness, and immorality. The “Civitas Solis,” of Thomas Campanella, and Lord Bacon’s “Nova Atlantis,” are included in the same volume. As both in the text and notes the author scatters round with a lavish hand proofs of his acquaintance with

idlest and the paltriest mime that ever mounted upon bank? Let him ask “the author of those toothless satires,” who was the maker, or rather the antirecreator of that universal foolery, who he was, who like that other principal of the Manichees the arch evil one, when he had looked upon all that he had made and mapped out, could say no other but contrary to the divine mouth, that it was all very foolish. That grave and noble invention, which the greatest and sublimest wits in sundry ages, Plato in Critias, and our two famous countrymen, the one in his “Utopia,” the other in his “New Atlantis,” chose, I may not say as a field, but as a mighty continent, wherein to display the largeness of their spirits, (¹²) by teaching this our world better and exacter things than were yet known or used: this petty prevaricator of America, the zany of Columbus, (for so he must be till his world’s end,) having rambled over the huge topography of his own vain thoughts, no marvel if he brought us home nothing but a mere tankard drollery, a venereous *parjetory* for stews. Certainly,

various languages, Milton, to humble his pride, represents him painfully picking up his knowledge from “Minsheu’s Dictionary,” a very curious book, now little known. It is entitled, “The Guide into the Tongues, with their agreement and consent one with another, as also their Etymologies, that is, the reasons and derivations of all or the most part of Words, in these Nine Languages, viz. English, Low Dutch, High Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, &c. By the industry, study, labour, and at the charges of John Minsheu, published and printed, July 22, 1625. 2nd. Edit. 1627.”

(¹²) Of Plato’s Critias, Sir Thomas More’s Utopia, and Lord Bacon’s New Atlantis, we shall elsewhere have occasion to speak.

he that could endure with a sober pen to sit and devise laws for drunkards to carouse by, I doubt me whether the very soberness of such a one, like an unliquored Silenus, were not stark drunk. Let him go now and brand another man injuriously with the name of mime, being himself the loosest and most extravagant mime that hath been heard of, whom no less than almost half the world could serve for stage-room to play the mime in. And let him advise again with sir Francis Bacon, whom he cites to confute others, what it is “to turn the sins of Christendom into a mimical mockery, to rip up the saddest vices with a laughing countenance,” especially where neither reproof nor better teaching is adjoined. Nor is my meaning, readers, to shift off a blame from myself, by charging the like upon my accuser, but shall only desire, that sentence may be respited, till I can come to some instance whereto I may give answer.

17. Thus having spent his first onset, not in confuting, but in a reasonless defaming of the book, the method of his malice hurries him to attempt the like against the author; not by proofs and testimonies, but “having no certain notice of me,” as he professes, “further than what he gathers from the Animadversions,” blunders at me for the rest, and flings out stray crimes at a venture, which he could never, though he be a serpent, suck from any thing that I have written, but from his own stuffed magazine and hoard of slanderous inventions, over and above that which he converted to venom in the drawing. To me, readers, it happens

as a singular contentment; and let it be to good men no light satisfaction, that the slanderer here confesses, he has “no further notice of me than his own conjecture.” Although it had been honest to have inquired, before he uttered such infamous words, and I am credibly informed he did inquire; but finding small comfort from the intelligence which he received, whereon to ground the falsities which he had provided, thought it his likeliest course under a pretended ignorance to let drive at random, lest he should lose his odd ends, which from some penurious book of characters he had been culling out and would fain apply. Not caring to burden me with those vices, whereof, among whom my conversation hath been, I have been ever least suspected; perhaps not without some subtlety to cast me into envy, by bringing on me a necessity to enter into mine own praises. In which argument I know every wise man is more unwillingly drawn to speak, than the most repining ear can be averse to hear.

18. Nevertheless, since I dare not wish to pass this life unpersecuted of slanderous tongues, for God hath told us that to be generally praised is woeful, I shall rely on his promise to free the innocent from causeless aspersions: whereof nothing sooner can assure me, than if I shall feel him now assisting me in the just vindication of myself, which yet I could defer, it being more meet, that to those other matters of public debatement in this book I should give attendance first, but that I fear it would but harm the truth for me to reason in

her behalf, so long as I should suffer my honest estimation to lie unpurged from these insolent suspicions. And if I shall be large, or unwonted in justifying myself to those who know me not, for else it would be needless, let them consider that a short slander will oft times reach further than a long apology ; and that he who will do justly to all men, must begin from knowing how, if it so happen, to be not unjust to himself. I must be thought, if this libeller (for now he shows himself to be so) can find belief, after an inordinate and riotous youth spent at the university, to have been at length “ vomited out thence.”⁽¹³⁾ For which commodious lie, that he may be encouraged in the trade another time, I thank him ; for it hath given me an apt occasion to acknowledge publicly with all grateful mind, that more than ordinary favour and respect, which I found above any of my

(13) The Rev. Mr. Mitford and Sir Egerton Bridges admit, perhaps too readily, that Milton underwent what, in university cant, is termed “ rustication.” That he was expelled from college, or subjected to personal chastisement, no one now believes ; nor was there ever a man, not wholly blinded by prejudice, who could seriously entertain the opinion. Johnson, supposing he was serving his party by reviving and giving currency to the calumny, prefaces his fiction with affected reluctance and concern. “I am ashamed to relate,” he says, “what I fear is true, Milton was one of the last students in either university that suffered the public indignity of corporal correction.” If he really felt shame, it was because he feared, or rather was persuaded, that what he was about to say was not true. This could have been his only apprehension. To have discovered some foundation for his slander would to him have been matter of joy and gratulation, not of sorrow. His pretended fear, therefore, was as hypocritical as his narrative is destitute of truth.

equals at the hands of those courteous and learned men, the fellows of that college wherein I spent some years: who at my parting, after I had taken two degrees, as the manner is, signified many ways how much better it would content them that I would stay; as by many letters full of kindness and loving respect, both before that time, and long after, I was assured of their singular good affection towards me. Which being likewise propense to all such as were for their studious and civil life worthy of esteem, I could not wrong their judgments and upright intentions, so much as to think I had that regard from them for other cause, than that I might be still encouraged to proceed in the honest and laudable courses, of which they apprehended I had given good proof. And to those ingenuous and friendly men, who were ever the countenancers of virtuous and hopeful wits, I wish the best and happiest things, that friends in absence wish one to another.

19. As for the common approbation or dislike of that place, as now it is, that I should esteem or disesteem myself, or any other the more for that, too simple and too credulous is the confuter, if he think to obtain with me, or any right discerner. (¹⁴)

(¹⁴) In his Reason of Church Government, as Mr. Mitford has already remarked, he had expressed his contempt for the University as a place for the training of youth, whose “honest and ingenuous natures coming to the universities to store themselves with good and solid learning, are there unfortunately fed with nothing else but the scragged and thorny lectures of monkish and miserable sophistry; were sent home again with such a scholastical bur in their throats, as hath stopped and hindered

Of small practice were that physician, who could not judge by what both she or her sister hath of long time vomited, that the worser stuff she strongly keeps in her stomach, but the better she is ever keeking at, and is queasy. She vomits now out of sickness ; but ere it will be well with her, she must vomit by strong physic. In the meantime that suburb sink, as this rude scavenger calls it, and more than scurrilously taunts it with the plague, having a worse plague in his middle entrail, that suburb wherein I dwell shall be in my account a more honourable place than his university. Which as in the time of her better health, and mine own younger judgment, I never greatly admired, so now much less. But he follows me to the city, still usurping and forging beyond his book notice, which only he affirms to have had ; “and where my morning haunts are, he wisses not.” It is wonder, that being so rare an alchymist of slander, he could not extract that, as well as the university vomit, and the suburb sink which his art could distil so cunningly ; but because his

all true and generous philosophy from entering ; cracked their voices for ever with metaphysical gargarisms ; hath made them admire a sort of formal outside men, prelatically addicted, whose unchastened and overwrought minds were never yet initiated, nor subdued under the true love of moral or religious virtue, which two are the best and greatest points of learning : but either slightly trained up in a kind of hypocritical and hackney course of literature to get their living by, and dazzle the ignorant, or else fondly overstudied in useless controversies, except those which they use, with all the specious and delusive subtlety they are able, to defend their prelatical Sparta.”

limbec fails him, to give him and envy the more vexation, I will tell him.

20. Those morning haunts are where they should be, at home; not sleeping, or concocting the surfeits of an irregular feast, but up and stirring, in winter often ere the sound of any bell awake men to labour, or to devotion; in summer as oft with the bird that first rouses, or not much tardier, (¹⁵) to read good authors, or cause them to be read, till the attention be weary, or memory have its full franght: then, with useful and generous labours preserving the body's health and hardiness to render lightsome, clear, and not lumpish obedience to the mind, to the cause of religion, and our

(¹⁵) Herault de Sechelles relates a curious story à propos of Buffon's habit of early rising. "Il rentrait quelquefois des soupers de Paris," says he, "à deux heures après minuit, lorsqu'il était jeune; et à cinq heures du matin, un Savoyard venait le tirer par les pieds, et le mettre sur le carreau, avec ordre de lui faire violence, dût-il se fâcher contre lui." At the age of seventy-eight he still rose at five o'clock. "A cinq heures il se lève, s'habille, se coiffe, dicte ses lettres, règles ses affaires. A six heures, il monte à son cabinet, qui est à l'extrémité de ses jardins, ce que fait presqu'un demi-quart de lieue, et la distance est d'autant plus pénible qu'il faut toujours ouvrir des grilles, et monter de terrasses en terrasses."—*Voyage à Montbar*, p. 16, 17. In traversing the Côte d'or the traveller still beholds from a distance the tower and gardens of Buffon. To his own practice of early rising Milton alludes in *L'Allegro*:

"To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night:
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise," &c.

And again in *Il Penseroso*, there is a beautiful description of the dawn, written with the graphic minuteness of one who had often admired it.

country's liberty, when it shall require firm hearts in sound bodies to stand and cover their stations, rather than to see the ruin of our protestation, and the enforcement of a slavish life.

21. These are the morning practices: proceed now to the afternoon; "in playhouses," he says, "and the bordelloes." Your intelligence, unfaithful spy of Canaan? He gives in his evidence, that "there he hath traced me." Take him at his word, readers; but let him bring good sureties ere ye dismiss him, that while he pretended to dog others, he did not turn in for his own pleasure: for so much in effect he concludes against himself, not contented to be caught in every other gin, but he must be such a novice as to be still hampered in his own hemp. In the *Animadversions*, saith he, I find the mention of old cloaks, false beards, night walkers, and salt lotion; (¹⁶) therefore the animadverter haunts playhouses and bordelloes; for if he did not, how could he speak of such gear? Now that he may know what it is to be a child,

(¹⁶) This refers to a fine passage in his "*Animadversions*," where we discover the first seeds of the "*Areopagitica*." In opposition to Hall, who would gladly, notwithstanding his boasted learning, have been protected by a censorship from the rough eloquence of his adversary, he maintains the wisdom and necessity of leaving the press free. Even Lord Bacon, he observes, "in one of his discourses, complains of the bishops' uneven hand over these pamphlets, confining those against bishops to darkness, but licensing those against puritans to be uttered openly." He then, after a sneer at their wigs, continues:—"The Romans had a time, once every year, when their slaves might freely speak their minds; it were hard if the free-born people of England, with whom the voice of truth for these

and yet to meddle with edged tools, I turn his antistrophon upon his own head; the confuter knows that these things are the furniture of playhouses and bordelloses, therefore by the same reason “the confuter himself hath been traced in those places.” Was it such a dissolute speech, telling of some

many years, even against the proverb, hath not been heard but in corners, after all your monkish prohibitions, and expurgatorial indexes, your gags and snaffles, your proud Imprimatura, not to be obtained without the shallow survieu, but *not shallow hand* of some mercenary, narrow-souled, and illiterate chaplain, when liberty of speaking, than which nothing is more sweet to man, was girded and strait-laced almost to a broken-winded phthisic, if now, at a good time, our time of parliament, the very jubilee and resurrection of the state, if now the concealed, the aggrieved, and long-persecuted truth, could not be suffered to speak.” Having thus described the pleasure of this freedom, he proceeds to enumerate its advantages, among which he instances its delivering princes and statesmen from the necessity of disguising themselves, and becoming eaves-droppers, “that they might hear every where the utterances of private breasts, and amongst them find out the precious gem of truth, as amongst the numberless pebbles of the shore; whereby they might be the abler to discover and avoid that deceitful and close-couched evil of flattery, that ever attends them, and misleads them, and might skilfully know how to apply the several redresses to each malady of state, without trusting the disloyal information of parasites and sycophants; whereas now this permission of free writing, were there no good else in it, yet at some times thus licensed, is such an unripping, such an anatomy of the shyest and tenderest particular truths, as makes not only the whole nation in many points the wiser, but also presents and carries home to princes, men most remote from vulgar concourse, such a full insight of every lurking evil, or restrained good among the commons, as that they shall not need hereafter, in old cloaks and false beards, to stand to the courtesy of a night-walking cudgeller for eaves-dropping, nor to accept quietly as a perfume the over-head emptying of some salt lotion.”

politicians who were wont to eavesdrop in disguises, to say they were often liable to a nightwalking cudgeller, or the emptying of a urinal? What if I had written as your friend the author of the aforesaid mime, "Mundus alter et idem," to have been ravished like some young Cephalus or Hylas, by a troop of camping housewives in Viraginea, and that he was there forced to swear himself an uxorious varlet; then after a long servitude to have come into Aphrodisia that pleasant country, that gave such a sweet smell to his nostrils among the shameless courtezans of Desvergonia? Surely he would have then concluded me as constant at the bordello, as the galley-slave at his oar.

22. But since there is such necessity to the hearsay of a tire, a periwig, or a vizard, that plays must have been seen, what difficulty was there in that? when in the colleges so many of the young divines, and those in next aptitude to divinity, have been seen so often upon the stage, writhing and unboning their clergy limbs to all the antic and dishonest gestures of Trinculoes, buffoons, and bawds; prostituting the shame of that ministry, which either they had, or were nigh having, to the eyes of courtiers and court ladies, with their grooms and mademoiselles.⁽¹⁷⁾ There, while they acted and overacted, among other young scholars, I was a spectator; they thought themselves gallant men, and I thought them fools; they made sport, and I

(17) Upon this passage Johnson has a remark in his usual style when speaking of Milton.—"One of his objections to academical education, as it was then conducted, is, that men designed

laughed ; they mispronounced, and I disliked ; and to make up the atticism, they were out, and I hissed. Judge now whether so many good text-men were not sufficient to instruct me of false beards and vizards, without more expositors ; and how can this confuter take the face to object to me

for orders in the church were permitted to act plays." He then quotes the above words, and adds :—" This is sufficiently peevish in a man who, when he mentions his exile from the college, relates, with great *luxuriance*," (what does he mean ?) "the compensation which the pleasures of the theatre afforded him. Plays were *therefore* only criminal when they were acted by academies." From all which the reader is required to infer neither more nor less than that Milton was a contemptible hypocrite. But the case stands thus : when he descended on the pleasures of the theatre "with great luxuriance," he was a youth, somewhere about eighteen ; the present "Apology" was written when he was between thirty and forty ; in the interval, *therefore*, time and opportunity enough had been afforded him to correct his boyish notions of the theatre, had they been wrong. Supposing, however, he had all his life entertained a partiality for the stage, did it necessarily follow from this that he must behold with "luxuriance," the ministers of Christ dishonouring their sacred calling by the personation of coarse and indecent characters ? This is all he here blames, as Johnson might have discovered, had he read the passage with attention. Elsewhere, speaking of certain works, our critic says,— " It is easier to praise than to read them :" no doubt he found it so, and on the present occasion reversed the rule : for it is quite clear that his acquaintance with Milton's prose works was extremely slight. In a note signed R. printed in the margin of Johnson's "Life," it is remarked, that "By the mention of this name (Trinculo) he evidently refers to 'Albemazor,' acted at Cambridge in 1614." But is there not a *Trinculo* in the 'Tempest ?' The annotator proceeds.—" 'Ignoramus,' and other plays were performed at the same time. The practice was then very frequent. The last dramatic performance at either university was the 'Grateful Fair,' written by Christopher Smart, and represented at Pembroke College, Cambridge, about 1747."

the seeing of that which his reverend prelates allow, and incite their young disciples to act? For if it be unlawful to sit and behold a mercenary comedian personating that which is least unseemly for a hireling to do, how much more blameful is it to endure the sight of as vile things acted by persons either entered, or presently to enter into the ministry; and how much more foul and ignominious for them to be the actors!

23. But because as well by this upbraiding to me the bordelloes, as by other suspicious glancings in his book, he would seem privily to point me out to his readers, as one whose custom of life were not honest, but licentious, I shall intreat to be borne with, though I digress; and in a way not often trod, acquaint ye with the sum of my thoughts in this matter, through the course of my years and studies. Although I am not ignorant how hazardous it will be to do this under the nose of the envious, as it were in skirmish to change the compact order, and instead of outward actions, to bring inmost thoughts into front. And I must tell ye, readers, that by this sort of men I have been already bitten at; yet shall they not for me know how slightly they are esteemed, unless they have so much learning as to read what in Greek ἀπειροκαλία⁽¹⁸⁾ is, which, together with envy, is the common disease of those who censure books that are not for their reading. With me it fares now, as with him whose outward garment hath

(18) Ἀπειροκαλία, is the conduct of one who is wanting in the knowledge of what is polite and becoming.

been injured and illbedighted; for having no other shift, what help but to turn the inside outwards, especially if the lining be of the same, or, as it is sometimes, much better? So if my name and outward demeanour be not evident enough to defend me, I must make trial, if the discovery of my inmost thoughts can: wherein of two purposes both honest, and both sincere, the one perhaps I shall not miss; although I fail to gain belief with others, of being such as my perpetual thoughts shall here disclose me, I may yet not fail of success in persuading some to be such really themselves, as they cannot believe me to be more than what I feign.

24. I had my time, readers, as others have, who have good learning bestowed upon them, to be sent to those places, where the opinion was, it might be soonest attained; and as the manner is, was not unstudied in those authors which are most commended. Whereof some were grave orators and historians, whose matter methought I loved indeed, but as my age then was, so I understood them; others were the smooth elegiac poets,⁽¹⁹⁾ whereof the schools are not scarce, whom both for the pleasing sound of their numerous writing,

(19) Among the elegiac poets his favourite was Ovid, at which no one will wonder who is acquainted with all the merits of that various and pleasing writer. Sir Egerton Brydges agrees with Warton,—he generally agrees with him,—“that it would have been more probable that he would have taken Lucretius and Virgil, as more congenial to him.” *Life of Milton*, p. 29. These, indeed, are great poets, but not very likely to become the favourites of a youth of ardent temperament and genius.

which in imitation I found most easy, and most agreeable to nature's part in me, and for their matter, which what it is, there be few who know not, I was so allured to read, that no recreation came to me better welcome. For that it was then those years with me which are excused, though they be least severe, I may be saved the labour to remember ye. Whence having observed them to account it the chief glory of their wit, in that they were ablest to judge, to praise, and by that could esteem themselves worthiest to love those high perfections, which under one or other name they took to celebrate; I thought with myself by every instinct and presage of nature, which is not wont to be false, that what emboldened them to this task, might with such diligence as they used embolden me; and that what judgment, wit, or elegance was my share, would herein best appear, and best value itself, by how much more wisely, and with more love of virtue I should choose (let rude ears be absent) the object of not unlike praises. For albeit these thoughts to some will seem virtuous and commendable, to others only pardonable, to a third sort perhaps idle; yet the mentioning of them now will end in serious.

25. Nor blame it, readers, in those years to propose to themselves such a reward, as the noblest dispositions above other things in this life have some-

Besides, if he wanted a model for poetical epistles, it would have been strange to find him groping among the atoms of Epicurus, or the details of agriculture, for something to suit his purpose.

times preferred : whereof not to be sensible when good and fair in one person meet, argues both a gross and shallow judgment, and withal an ungentle, and swainish breast. For by the firm settling of these persuasions, I became, to my best memory, so much a proficient, that if I found those authors any where speaking unworthy things of themselves, or unchaste of those names which before they had extolled ; this effect it wrought with me, from that time forward their art I still applauded, but the men I deplored ; and above them all, preferred the two famous renouners of Beatrice(²⁰) and Laura, who never write but honour of them to whom they devote their verse, displaying sublime and pure thoughts, without transgression. And long it was not after, when I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem ; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourablest things ; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men, or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praiseworthy. These reasonings, together with a certain niceness of nature, an honest haughtiness, and self-esteem either of what I was, or what I might be, (which let envy call pride,) and lastly that modesty, whereof though not in the title-page, yet here I may be excused to make some beseeming profession ; all these uniting the supply of their natural aid together, kept me still above

(²⁰) Dante and Petrarch.

those low descents of mind, beneath which he must deject and plunge himself, that can agree to saleable and unlawful prostitutions.

26. Next, (for hear me out now, readers,) that I may tell ye whither my younger feet wandered ; I betook me among those lofty fables and romances,(²¹) which recount in solemn cantos the deeds of knighthood founded by our victorious kings, and from hence had in renown over all Christendom. There I read it in the oath of every knight, that he should defend to the expense of his best blood, or of his life, if it so befel him, the honour and chastity of virgin or matron ; from whence even then I learned what a noble virtue chastity sure must be, to the defence

(²¹) It has sometimes been thought matter of wonder that, in spite of his high classical predilections, Milton should have delighted in the romances of chivalry. But he had a catholic taste, and loved excellence wherever it was to be found. Besides, those romances were still so much read in his age, that we find even Bunyan covertly alluding, in the Pilgrim's Progress, to circumstances which prove he was familiar with them. Every one, in fact, who possesses a spark of imagination, must find pleasure in the wild adventures they describe, and which, as far as they are natural, are in perfect harmony with the no less romantic enterprises of the ancients. To allude to a few examples only, what can be conceived more in the spirit of knight-errantry, than the Argonautic expedition, the wanderings of Hercules and Bellerophon, the daring undertaking of those young men who penetrated into the heart of Africa, the voyage of Hanno, the travels of Euhemerus, or the fanatic expedition of Apollonius of Tyana to the country of the Gymnosophists ? In the Areopagitica, where, with the skill of an orator, he is beating down Plato's arguments for a censorship, he mentions two of these romances,—the Arcadia and Monte Mayor,—which were, perhaps, among his favourites.

of which so many worthies, by such a dear adventure of themselves, had sworn. And if I found in the story afterward, any of them, by word or deed, breaking that oath, I judged it the same fault of the poet, as that which is attributed to Homer, to have written indecent things of the gods.⁽²²⁾ Only this my mind gave me, that every free and gentle spirit, without that oath, ought to be born a knight, nor needed to expect the gilt spur, or the laying of a sword upon his shoulder to stir him up both by his counsel and his arms, to secure and protect the weakness of any attempted

(22) He here alludes to a passage in the second book of Plato's Republic : (*t. vi. 69, et seqq. edit. Bekk.*) where the philosopher introduces Adeimantus animadverting with just severity on the absurdity and immorality sometimes found in the works of the poets, " who, though they praise virtue, represent it, nevertheless, as difficult and laborious, and much inferior to vice in administering delight. They agree also with the multitude in considering injustice more profitable than justice ; and, while they despise the poor and uninfluential, whom, at the same time, perhaps, they admit to be superior in virtue, all their praise and admiration, both in public and private, are lavished on the rich and powerful. But most extraordinary of all, are their discourses concerning virtue and the gods, who, according to them, frequently overwhelm the good with misfortune, and rain plenty and prosperity upon the impiously wicked." He then, in a very curious passage, too long to be here inserted, describes how the holy quacks of antiquity, true prototypes of the Pope, sold indulgences to the wealthy, and undertook, for a consideration, to free the souls of their ancestors from purgatory, or to avenge them upon their enemies, whether good or bad, by purchasing or compelling the connivance of the gods, *'επαγωγαῖς τισὶ καὶ καταΐσμοις*, that is, "by certain allurements and magical charms." In these unworthy sentiments, Homer, he says, participated, representing the gods as diverted from their purpose by prayers and sacrifices.

chastity. So that even these books, which to many others have been the fuel of wantonness and loose living, I cannot think how, unless by divine indulgence, proved to me so many incitements, as you have heard, to the love and steadfast observation of that virtue which abhors the society of bordelloes.

27. Thus, from the laureat fraternity of poets, riper years and the ceaseless round of study and reading led me to the shady spaces of philosophy; but chiefly to the divine volumes of Plato, and his equal, Xenophon: where, if I should tell ye what I learnt of chastity and love,(²³) I mean that which

(²³) Milton, like every other great and noble mind, entertained the most elevated ideas of pure love. In the *Paradise Lost*, he thus, in a burst of enthusiasm, apostrophizes this holiest of all passions :—

“ Hail, wedded love! mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety,
In paradise of all things common else.
* * * * *
Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste prononced,
Present or past, as saints or patriarchs used.
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels.”—*Book iv. v. 750, &c.*

Again :—

“ Love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious, is the scale
By which to heavenly love thou mayst ascend.”—*Book viii. v. 589, &c.*

Elsewhere he beautifully denominates smiles, “the food of love :”—

“ Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow,
To brute denied, and are of love the food,
Love, not the lowest end of human life.”—*Book ix. v. 235, &c.*

Plato, who, it will readily be imagined, was a favourite with

is truly so, whose charming cup is only virtue, which she bears in her hand to those who are worthy; (the rest are cheated with a thick intoxicating potion, which a certain sorceress, the abuser of love's name, carries about;) and how the first and chiefest office of love begins and ends in the soul, producing those happy twins of her divine generation, knowledge and virtue. With such abstracted sublimities as these, it might be worth your listening, readers, as I may one day hope to

Milton, as he never fails to be with all who possess or can appreciate genius, has, in the Phaedrus and Symposium, delivered in a highly poetical and beautiful manner, his ideas on the nature of love; rising from the reprehension of that which is most vicious, to the loftiest and purest yearning of soul towards soul. "There is no one so base," says he, "as not to be inspired by love with a divine ardour for virtue, and rendered capable of contending in magnanimity with the noblest natures." To the question,—"What is love?" put by Socrates, Diotima, priestess of Venus, replies,—"*Δαιμων μέγας, ὁ Σώκρατες*;—"A mighty spirit, Socrates, which, like other demons, is half human, half divine; and its power is that of an interpreter and mediator between heaven and earth, conveying aloft the vows and prayers of mankind, and revealing to mortals the commands and responses of the gods. He stands in the midst between God and man, and fills and binds together the several parts of the universe. All religious institutions proceed from him. He is the originator of sacrifices, rites, hymns, prophesy. The divine and human natures meet only in him; he is the channel through which, waking or sleeping, men hold communication with heaven; and, while all others are esteemed mercenary and vulgar, he who exercises any of the ministries taught by love is regarded as the possessor of wisdom." But, to catch the spirit of Plato's doctrine, the whole dialogue must be read; (*edit. Bekk. t. iv. p. 369—469.*) and read, moreover, with the same feeling in which it was written. Among modern writers we know of none who have spoken of love more elo-

have ye in a still time, when there shall be no chiding; not in these noises, the adversary, as ye know, barking at the door, or searching for me at the bordelloes, where it may be has lost himself, and raps up without pity the sage and rheumatic old prelatess, with all her young Corinthian laity, to inquire for such a one.

28. Last of all, not in time, but as perfection is last, that care was ever had of me, with my earliest capacity, not to be negligently trained in the pre-

quently or philosophically than Baxter and Jeremy Taylor. "Therefore," exclaims the former, "he that hath made love the great command, doth tell us that love is the great conception of his own essence, the spring of that command; and that this commanded imperfect love, doth tend to perfect heavenly love, even to our communion with essential infinite love." * * * Every place that I have lived in was a place of divine love, which there set up its obliging monuments. Every year and hour of my life hath been a time of love. Every friend, and every neighbour, yea, every enemy, have been the messengers and instruments of love."—*Dying Thoughts*, p. 279, 280.—"Love," says Jeremy Taylor, "is infinitely removed from all possibility of rudeness; it is a thing pure as light, sacred as a temple, lasting as the world. 'The love that can cease was never true;' it is ὄμιλια, so Moses called it; it is εὖνοια, so St. Paul; it is φιλότης, so Homer; it is φιλοφροσύνη, so Plutarch: that is, it contains in it all sweetness and all society, and felicity, and all prudence, and all wisdom. For there is nothing can please a man without love; and if a man be weary of the wise discourses of the apostles, and of the innocence of an even and private fortune, or hates peace or a fruitful year, he hath reaped thorns and thistles from the choicest flowers of paradise; 'for nothing can sweeten felicity itself but love:' but when a man dwells in love, then the breasts of his wife are pleasant as the droppings on the hill of Hermon, her eyes are fair as the light of heaven, she is a fountain sealed, and he can quench his thirst, and ease his cares, and lay his sorrows down on her lap, and can

cepts of the Christian religion :⁽²⁴⁾ this that I have hitherto related, hath been to show, that though Christianity had been but slightly taught me, yet a certain reservedness of natural disposition, and moral discipline, learnt out of the noblest philosophy, was enough to keep me in disdain of far less incontinences than this of the bordello. But having had the doctrine of Holy Scripture, unfolding those chaste and high mysteries, with timeliest care infused, that “the body is for the Lord, and

retire home to his sanctuary and refectory, and his gardens of sweetness and chaste refreshments. No man can tell but he that loves his children, how many delicious accents make a man’s heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society : but he that loves not his wife and children, feeds a lioness at home, and broods a nest of sorrows ; and blessing itself cannot make him happy. So that all the commandments of God enjoining a man to love his wife, are nothing but so many necessities and capacities of joy. ‘She that is loved is safe ; and he that loves is joyful.’ Love is a union of all things excellent ; it contains in it proportion and satisfaction ; and rest and confidence ; and I wish that this were so much proceeded in, that the heathens themselves could not go beyond us in this virtue, and its proper and appendant happiness.”—*The Marriage Ring: Sacred Classics*, vol. vii. p. 179—181.—*Select Sermons.*

(²⁴) All Milton’s biographers speak of the religious education he received. “It was at this early period of his life, as we may confidently conjecture, that he imbibed that spirit of devotion which actuated his bosom to his latest moment upon earth : and we need not extend our search beyond the limits of his own house for the fountain from which the living influence was derived.”—*Symmons’ Life of Milton*, 2nd edit. p. 53.

the Lord for the body ;" thus also I argued to myself, that if unchastity in a woman, whom St. Paul terms the glory of man, be such a scandal and dishonour, then certainly in a man, who is both the image and glory of God, it must, though commonly not so thought, be much more deflowering and dishonourable ; in that he sins both against his own body, which is the perfecter sex, and his own glory, which is in the woman ; and, that which is worst, against the image and glory of God, which is in himself. Nor did I slumber over that place, expressing such high rewards of ever accompanying the Lamb, with those celestial songs to others inapprehensible, but not to those who were not defiled with women, which doubtless means fornication ; for marriage must not be called a defilement.

29. Thus large I have purposely been, that if I have been justly taxed with this crime, it may come upon me, after all this my confession, with a tenfold shame : but if I have hitherto deserved no such opprobrious word, or suspicion, I may hereby engage myself now openly to the faithful observation of what I have professed. I go on to show you the unbridled impudence of this loose railer, who, having once begun his race, regards not how far he flies out beyond all truth and shame ; who from the single notice of the Animadversions, as he protests, will undertake to tell ye the very clothes I wear, though he be much mistaken in my wardrobe : and like a son of Belial, without the hire of Jezebel, charges me "of blaspheming God and the king," as ordinarily as he imagines " me

to drink sack (²⁵) and swear," merely because this was a shred in his common-place book, and seemed to come off roundly, as if he were some empiric of false accusations, to try his poisons upon me, whether they would work or not. Whom what should I endeavour to refute more, whenas that book, which is his only testimony, returns the lie upon him; not giving him the least hint of the author to be either a swearer or a sack drinker. And for the readers, if they can believe me, principally for those reasons which I have alleged, to be of life and purpose neither dishonest nor unchaste, they will be easily induced to think me sober both of wine and of word; but if I have been already successless in persuading them, all that I can further say, will be but vain; and it will be better thrift to save two tedious labours, mine of excusing, and theirs of needless hearing.

30. Proceeding further, I am met with a whole ging of words and phrases not mine, for he hath maimed them, and, like a sly depraver, mangled them in this his wicked limbo, worse than the ghost of Deiphobus appeared to his friend Eneas. (²⁶)

(²⁵) Young Hall, who was probably better read in Shakespeare than in the Bible, was perhaps thinking of Falstaff, when he spoke of drinking sack and swearing. Like Aristophanes, he seems to have scrupled nothing as to what he threw at his adversary, so he thought it might stick. Truth and falsehood were all one to this "generous youth," as Dr. Symmons calls him.

(²⁶) "Atque hic Priamiden laniatum corpore toto
Deiphobum vidit, lacerum crudeliter ora,
Ora manusque ambas, populataque tempora raptis
Auribus, et truncas in honesto volnere naris."

Eneid. vi. 494, seqq.

I scarce know them, and he that would, let him repair to the place in that book where I set them : for certainly this tormentor of semicolons is as good at dismembering and slitting sentences, as his grave fathers the prelates have been at stigmatizing and slitting noses.⁽²⁷⁾ By such handi-craft as this what might he not traduce? Only that odour, which being his own must needs offend his sense of smelling, since he will needs bestow his foot among us, and not allow us to think he wears a sock, I shall endeavour it may be offence-less to other men's ears. The Remonstrant having to do with grave and reverend men his adversaries, thought it became him to tell them in scorn, that “the bishop's foot had been in their book and confuted it;” which when I saw him arrogate to have done that with his heels that surpassed the best consideration of his head, to spurn a confutation among respected men, I questioned not the lawfulness of moving his jollity to bethink him, what odour a sock would have in such painful business. And this may have chanced to touch him more nearly than I was aware, for indeed a bishop's foot that hath all his toes maugre the gout, and a linen sock over it, is the aptest emblem of the prelate himself; who being a pluralist, may under one surplice, which is also linen, hide four benefices, besides the metropolitan toe, and sends a fouler stench to heaven, than that which this young queasiness retches at. And this is the im-

(27) Alluding to their cruel persecutions of the Puritans.

mediate reason here why our enraged confuter, that he may be as perfect a hypocrite as Caiaphas, ere he be a high-priest, cries out, “ Horrid blasphemy !” and, like a recreant Jew, calls for stones. I beseech ye, friends, ere the brickbats fly, resolve me and yourselves, is it blasphemy, or any whit disagreeing from Christian meekness, whenas Christ himself, speaking of unsavoury traditions, scruples not to name the dunghill and the jakes, for me to answer a slovenly wincer of a confutation, that if he would needs put his foot to such a sweaty service, the odour of his sock was like to be neither musk nor benjamin ? Thus did that foolish monk in a barbarous declamation accuse Petrarch of blasphemy for dispraising the French wines.

31. But this which follows is plain bedlam stuff, this is the demoniac legion indeed, which the Remonstrant feared had been against him, and now he may see is for him. “ You that love Christ,” saith he, “ and know this miscreant wretch, stone him to death, lest you smart for his impunity.”⁽²⁸⁾

(²⁸) Though wanting the power to persecute, Milton’s adversaries, stung by his sarcastic eloquence, would gladly have employed against him the arguments of the Inquisition. This is seldom the feeling of persons who know themselves to be triumphant in controversy. Yet Mr. Mitford observes, that “the Puritans were totally unable to compete with such men as Usher, Hall, Bramhall, and others of the established religion, in theological learning, and knowledge of ecclesiastical history.”—*Life of Milton*, p. xxxi. It seems very strange, if this was the case, that Bishop Hall should have suffered his son, whom, according to Milton, (§ 33.) he assisted in the composition of his work, to incite all good Christians to stone his

What thinks the Remonstrant? does he like that such words as these should come out of his shop, out of his *Trojan horse*? To give the watch-word like a Guisian of Paris to a mutiny or massacre; to proclaim a crusade against his fellow-christian now in this troublous and divided time of the kingdom? If he do, I shall say that to be the Remonstrant, is no better than to be a Jesuit; and that if he and his accomplices could do as the rebels have done in Ireland to the Protestants, they would do in England the same to them that would no prelates. For a more seditious and butcherly speech no cell of Loyola could have belched against one who in all his writing spake not, that any man's skin should be rased.

32. And yet this cursing Shimei, a hurler of stones, as well as a railer, wants not the face instantly to make as though he "despaired of victory, unless a modest defence would get it him." Did I err at all, readers, to foretel ye, when first I met with his title, that the epithet of modest there was a certain red portending sign, that he meant ere long to be most tempestuously

adversary. Men seldom think of stoning till all other arguments have failed them. Salmasius, not more able than Bishop Hall's son to contend with Milton, thought the shortest mode of confutation would be to roll him in pitch, and set fire to him; or else to torture him to death with boiling oil:— "Pro cæteris autem tuis factis dictisque dignum dicam videri, qui pice ardenti, vel oleo fervente perfundaris, usque dum animam effles nocentem et carnifici jam pridem debitum." This was published after the restoration, and with great propriety dedicated to Charles II.

bold and shameless? Nevertheless, he dares not say but there may be hid in his nature as much venomous atheism⁽²⁹⁾ and profanation, as he thinks hath broke out at his adversary's lips; but he hath not "the sore running upon him," as he would intimate I have. Now trust me not, readers, if I be not already weary of pluming and footing this sea-gull, so open he lies to strokes, and never offers at another, but brings home the dorre himself. For if the sore be running upon me, in all judgment I have escaped the disease; but he who hath as much hid in him, as he hath voluntarily confessed, and cannot expel it, because he is dull, (for venomous atheism were no treasure to be kept within him else,) let him take the part he hath chosen, which must needs follow, to swell and burst with his own inward venom.

33. But mark, readers, there is a kind of justice observed among them that do evil, but this man loves injustice in the very order of his malice. For having all this while abused the good name of his adversary with all manner of licence in revenge of his Remonstrant, if they be not both one person, or as I am told, father and son, yet after all this he calls for satisfaction, whenas he himself hath already taken the utmost farthing. "Violence hath been done," says he, "to the person of a holy and religious prelate." To which, something in effect to what St. Paul answered of Ananias, I an-

(29) It has always been customary, as Locke observes, for men who are vanquished in argument to accuse their opponents of atheism.

sver, “I wist not, brethren, that he was a holy and religious prelate;” for evil is written of those who would be prelates. And finding him thus in disguise without his superscription or phylactery either of holy or prelate, it were no sin to serve him as Longchamp bishop of Ely⁽³⁰⁾ was served in

(³⁰) He here alludes to a curious adventure, slightly mentioned by Smectymnuus, p. 88, and related at length by Holinshed. This proud prelate, who, on the departure of Richard the First for the Holy Land, was entrusted, as Lord Chancellor of England, with great authority in the government of the kingdom, conducted himself in a haughty tyrannical manner, riding about attended by a body of a thousand horse, lodging forcibly in the abbeys and other places, and committing other acts of oppression, which at length terminated in a civil war. Unable to meet his enemies in the field, Longchamp shut himself up in the Tower, from whence, after a long siege, he was compelled to effect his escape. “This done,” says the chronicler, “he hasted to Canterbury, where he promised to receive the cross of a pilgrim to go into the Holy Land, and to render up the cross of his legateship, which he had usurped a year and a half after the death of Pope Clement, to the prejudice of the church of Rome, and to the detriment and great hinderance of the English church. For there was not any church within the realm, which had not been put to fine and ransom by that cross, nor any ecclesiastical person went free, but the print of the cross appeared in him and his purse. From Canterbury he got him to Dover to his brother-in-law, and finally seeking means to pass over into France, and doubting to be discovered, he apparelled himself in woman’s raiment; and got a web of cloth on his arm, as though he had been some housewifely woman of the country: but by the untowardly folding and uncumming handling of his cloth, (or rather by a lewd fisherman that took him for a harlot,) he was suspected and searched so narrowly, that he was discovered to be a man, and at length known, attached, and committed to prison, after he had been reproachfully handled by them that found him, and by the wives of the town, in such unseemly apparel.” *Chronicles of England, &c.* vol. ii. p. 228. edit. of 1807.

his disguise at Dover: he hath begun the measure nameless, and when he pleases we may all appear as we are. And let him be then what he will, he shall be to me so as I find him principled. For neither must prelate or archprelate hope to exempt himself from being reckoned as one of the vulgar, which is for him only to hope whom true wisdom and the contempt of vulgar opinions exempts, it being taught us in the Psalms, that he who is in honour and understandeth not, is as the beasts that perish.

34. And now first “the manner of handling that cause,” which I undertook, he thinks is suspicious, as if the wisest and the best words were not ever to some or other suspicious. But where is the offence, the disagreement from Christian meekness, or the precept of Solomon in answering folly? When the Remonstrant talks of froth and scum, I tell him there is none, and bid him spare his ladle: when he brings in the mess with keal, beef, and brewess, what stomach in England could forbear to call for flanks and briskets? ⁽³¹⁾ Capon

(31) In the Animadversions there occurs a curious passage which our historical gastronomers would appear to have overlooked. “Nothing will cure this man’s understanding but some familiar and kitchen physic, which, with pardon, must for plainness’ sake be administered to him. Call hither your cook. The order of breakfast, dinner, and supper, answer me, is it set or not?—Set. Is a man therefore bound in the morning to poached eggs and vinegar, or at noon to brawn or beef, or at night to fresh salmon, and French kickshaws? (*quelque chose.*) May he not make his meals in order, though he be not bound to this or that viand? Doubtless the neat-fingered *artist* will answer yes, and help us out of this great controversy without more trouble.”

and white broth having been likely sometimes in the same room with Christ and his apostles, why does it trouble him, that it should be now in the same leaf, especially where the discourse is not continued, but interrupt? And let him tell me, is he wont to say grace, doth he not then name holiest names over the steam of costliest superfluities? Does he judge it foolish or dishonest, to write that among religious things, which, when he talks of religious things, he can devoutly chew? Is he afraid to name Christ where those things are written in the same leaf, whom he fears not to name while the same things are in his mouth? Doth not Christ himself teach the highest things by the similitude of old bottles and patched clothes? Doth he not illustrate best things by things most evil? his own coming to be as a thief in the night, and the righteous man's wisdom to that of an unjust steward? He might therefore have done better to have kept in his canting beggars, and heathen altar, to sacrifice his threadbare criticism of Bomolochus to an unseasonable goddess fit for him called Importunity, and have reserved his Greek derivation till he lecture to his freshmen, for here his itching pedantry is but flouted.

35. But to the end that nothing may be omitted, which may farther satisfy any conscientious man, who, notwithstanding what I could explain before the Animadversions, remains yet unsatisfied concerning that way of writing which I there defended, but this confuter, whom it pinches, utterly disapproves; I shall assay once again, and perhaps

with more success. If therefore the question were in oratory, whether a vehement vein throwing out indignation or scorn upon an object that merits it, were among the aptest *ideas* (³²) of speech to be allowed, it were my work, and that an easy one, to make it clear both by the rules of best rhetoricians, and the famousest examples of the Greek and Roman orations. But since the religion of it is disputed, and not the art, I shall make use only of such reasons and authorities, as religion cannot except against. It will be harder to gainsay, than for me to evince, that in the teaching of men diversely tempered, different ways are to be tried. The Baptist, we know, was a strict man, remarkable for austerity and set order of life. Our Saviour, who had all gifts in him, was Lord to express his indoctrinating power in what sort him best seemed; sometimes by a mild and familiar converse; sometimes with plain and impartial home-speaking, regardless of those whom the auditors might think he should have had in more respect; otherwhile, with bitter and ireful rebukes, if not teaching, yet leaving excuseless those his wilful impugners.

36. What was all in him, was divided among many others the teachers of his church; (³³) some

(³²) The word *ἰδέα*, is here used according to its primitive signification, for “form,” and not in the philosophical sense in which it was afterwards employed by Locke.

(³³) In no treatise that we have seen of pulpit oratory is there any thing for power and truth comparable to this. The personification of zeal approaches, in poetical daring, whatever is

to be severe and ever of a sad gravity, that they may win such, and check sometimes those who be of nature over-confident and jocund; others were sent more cheerful, free, and still as it were at large, in the midst of an untrespassing honesty; that they who are so tempered, may have by whom they might be drawn to salvation, and they who are too scrupulous, and dejected of spirit, might be often strengthened with wise consolations and revivings: no man being forced wholly to dissolve that groundwork of nature which God created in him, the sanguine to empty out all his sociable liveliness, the choleric to expel quite the unsinning predominance of his anger; but that each radical humour and passion, wrought upon and corrected as it ought, might be made the proper mould and foundation of every man's peculiar gifts and virtues. Some also were indued with a staid moderation and soundness of argument, to teach and convince the rational and soberminded; yet not therefore that to be thought the only expedient course of teaching, for in times of opposition, when either against new heresies arising, or old corrup-

boldest and most elevated in "Paradise Lost;" and the graphic description of the many various styles of preaching, originating in the personal character and physical organization of the ministers, bespeaks a skill and an acuteness of discrimination worthy of Aristotle himself. His conception of the manner of Luther, which perfectly agrees with what Bossuet, in his "Histoire des Variations," relates of the fiery eloquence of that great reformer, differs very little from the idea which a just critic must form of his own style; and, indeed, he appears to have felt the resemblance.

tions to be reformed, this cool unpassionate mildness of positive wisdom is not enough to damp and astonish the proud resistance of carnal and false doctors, then (that I may have leave to soar awhile as the poets use) Zeal, whose substance is ethereal, arming in complete diamond, ascends his fiery chariot drawn with two blazing meteors, figured like beasts, but of a higher breed than any the zodiac yields, resembling two of those four which Ezekiel and St. John saw; the one visaged like a lion, to express power, high authority, and indignation; the other of countenance like a man, to cast derision and scorn upon perverse and fraudulent seducers: with these the invincible warrior, Zeal, shaking loosely the slack reins, drives over the heads of scarlet prelates, and such as are insolent to maintain traditions, bruising their stiff necks under his flaming wheels.

37. Thus did the true prophets of old combat with the false; thus Christ himself, the fountain of meekness, found acrimony enough to be still galling and vexing the prelatical pharisees. But ye will say, these had immediate warrant from God to be thus bitter; and I say, so much the plainer is it proved, that there may be a sanctified bitterness against the enemies of truth. Yet that ye may not think inspiration only the warrant thereof, but that it is as any other virtue, of moral and general observation, the example of Luther may stand for all, whom God made choice of before others to be of highest eminence and power in reforming the church; who, not of revelation, but

of judgment, writ so vehemently against the chief defenders of old untruths in the Romish church, that his own friends and favourers were many times offended with the fierceness of his spirit; yet he being cited before Charles the Fifth to answer for his books, and having divided them into three sorts, whereof one was of those which he had sharply written, refused, though upon deliberation given him, to retract or unsay any word therein, as we may read in Sleidan. Yea, he defends his eagerness, as being “of an ardent spirit, and one who could not write a dull style:” and affirmed, “he thought it God’s will, to have the inventions of men thus laid open, seeing that matters quietly handled were quickly forgot.”

38. And herewithal how useful and available God bath made his tart rhetoric in the church’s cause, he often found by his own experience. For when he betook himself to lenity and moderation, as they call it, he reaped nothing but contempt both from Cajetan and Erasmus, from Co-cleus, from Ecchius, and others; insomuch that blaming his friends, who had so counselled him, he resolved never to run into the like error. If at other times he seem to excuse his vehemence, as more than what was meet, I have not examined through his works, to know how far he gave way to his own fervent mind; it shall suffice me to look to mine own. And this I shall easily aver, though it may seem a hard saying, that the Spirit of God, who is purity itself, when he would reprove any fault severely, or but relate things done or said

with indignation by others, abstains not from some words not civil at other times to be spoken. Omitting that place in Numbers at the killing of Zimri and Cosbi, done by Phineas in the height of zeal, related, as the rabbins expound, not without an obscene word; we may find in Deuteronomy and three of the prophets, where God, denouncing bitterly the punishments of idolaters, tells them in a term immodest to be uttered in cool blood, that their wives shall be defiled openly.

39. But these, they will say, were honest words in that age when they were spoken. Which is more than any rabbin can prove; and certainly had God been so minded, he could have picked such words as should never have come into abuse. What will they say to this? David going against Nabal, in the very same breath when he had just before named the name of God, he vows not "to leave any alive of Nabal's house that pisseth against the wall." But this was unadvisedly spoken, you will answer, and set down to aggravate his infirmity.⁽³⁴⁾ Turn then to the first of Kings, where God himself uses the phrase, "I will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall." Which had it been an unseemly speech in the heat of an earnest expression, then we must conclude that Jonathan or Onkelos the targumists were of cleaner language than he that made the tongue;

(34) This introduction of objector and respondent, arguing the matter dialectically, shows with what mastery he managed every artifice of style.

for they render it as briefly, “I will cut off all who are at years of discretion,” that is to say, so much discretion as to hide nakedness. Whereas God, who is the author both of purity and eloquence, chose this phrase as fittest in that vehement character wherein he spake. Otherwise that plain word might have easily been forborne: which the mazoreths and rabbinical scholiasts, not well attending, have often used to blur the margin with Keri instead of Ketiv, and gave us this insulse rule out of their Talmud, “That all words which in the law are written obscenely, must be changed to more civil words:” fools, who would teach men to read more decently than God thought good to write. And thus I take it to be manifest, that indignation against men and their actions notoriously bad hath leave and authority oftentimes to utter such words and phrases, as in common talk were not so mannerly to use. That ye may know, not only as the historian speaks, “that all those things for which men plough, build, or sail, obey virtue,” but that all words, and whatsoever may be spoken, shall at some time in an unwonted manner wait upon her purposes.

40. Now that the confutant may also know as he desires, what force of teaching there is sometimes in laughter; I shall return him in short, that laughter being one way of answering “a fool according to his folly,” teaches two sorts of persons, first, the fool himself “not to be wise in his own conceit,” as Solomon affirms; which is certainly a great document to make an unwise man know him-

self. Next, it teacheth the hearers, inasmuch as scorn is one of those punishments, which belong to men carnally wise, which is oft in Scripture declared ; for when such are punished, “the simple are thereby made wise,” if Solomon’s rule be true. And I would ask, to what end Eliah mocked the false prophets ? was it to show his wit, or to fulfil his humour ? Doubtless we cannot imagine that great servant of God had any other end, in all which he there did, but to teach and instruct the poor misled people. And we may frequently read, that many of the martyrs in the midst of their troubles were not sparing to deride and scoff their superstitious persecutors. Now may the confutant advise again with Sir Francis Bacon, whether Eliah and the martyrs did well to turn religion into a comedy or satire ; “to rip up the wounds of idolatry and superstition with a laughing countenance :” so that for pious gravity the author here is matched and overmatched, and for wit and morality in one that follows :

“ —— laughing to teach the truth
What hinders ? as some teachers give to boys
Junkets and knacks that they may learn apace.”

Thus Flaccus in his first satire, and his tenth :

“ —— Jesting decides great things
Stronglier and better oft than earnest can.”

41. I could urge the same out of Cicero and Seneca, but he may content him with this. And henceforward, if he can learn, may know as well what are the bounds and objects of laughter and

vehement reproof, as he hath known hitherto how to deserve them both. But lest some may haply think, or thus expostulate with me after this debate, who made you the busy almoner to deal about this dole of laughter and reprehension, which no man thanks your bounty for? To the urbanity of that man I should answer much after this sort: that I, friend objector, having read of heathen philosophers, some to have taught, that whosoever would but use his ear to listen, might hear the voice of his guiding genius ever before him, calling, and as it were pointing to that way which is his part to follow; others, as the stoics, to account reason, which they call the Hegemonicon (³⁵), to be the common Mercury conducting without error those that give themselves obediently to be led accordingly. Having read this, I could not esteem so poorly of the faith which I profess, that God had left nothing to those who had forsaken all other doctrines for his, to be an inward witness and warrant of what they have to do, as that they should need to measure themselves by

(³⁵) What Milton here intends may be learned from a passage of Nemesius “De Animâ.” “Zeno Stoicus, inquit, octonarum partium animam esse censem, partiens eam in principem facultatem,—τὸ ἴγεμονικὸν,—in quinque sensus, et vocis mittendae, procreandique vim. Panætius philosophus edendæ vocis facultatem, motionis ejus quā per se animalia carent, partem esse vult: et quidem rectissimè. Procreatricem verò, non animæ, sed naturæ partem.” “Duas e ergo docto tollit, sex relinquit;” says Lipsius. *Physiol. Stoic.* l. iii. Diss. xvii. *Opera*, t. iv. p. 1002, Stobæus observes to the same purpose: τὸ ἴγεμονικὸν ἀρχοντος χώραν ἔχειν. τὰ δε ἄλλα μέοη εν ὑπηρέτου τάξι ἀπεσίδουσαν

other men's measures, how to give scope or limit to their proper actions; for that were to make us the most at a stand, the most uncertain and accidental wanderers in our doings, of all religions in the world. So that the question ere while moved, who is he that spends thus the benevolence of laughter and reproof so liberally upon such men as the prelates, may return with a more just demand, who he is not of place and knowledge never so mean, under whose contempt and jerk these men are not deservedly fallen? Neither can religion receive any wound by disgrace thrown upon the prelates, since religion and they surely were never in such amity. They rather are the men who have wounded religion, and their stripes must heal her. I might also tell them, what Electra in Sophocles, a wise virgin, answered her wicked mother, who thought herself too violently reproved by her the daughter:

"Tis you that say it, not I ; you do the deeds,
And your ungodly deeds find me the words.

42. If therefore the Remonstrant complain of libels, it is because he feels them to be right aimed. For I ask again, as before in the Animadversions, how long is it since he hath disrelished libels? We never heard the least mutter of his voice against them while they flew abroad without control or check, defaming the Scots and Puritans (³⁶). And

(³⁶) The libels against the Puritans previous to the Great Revolution were milk and honey compared with those published after the Restoration. Among these Butler's ingenious poem must be reckoned; and the fanatical notes of Dr. Grey con-

yet he can remember of none but Lysimachus Nicænor, and “that he disliked and censured.” No more but of one can the Remonstrant remember? What if I put him in mind of one more? What if of one more whereof the Remonstrant in many likelihoods may be thought the author? Did he never see a pamphlet intitled after his own fashion, “A Survey of that foolish, seditious, scandalous, profane Libel, the Protestation protested?” The child doth not more expressly refigure the visage of his father, than that book resembles the style of the Remonstrant, in those idioms of speech, wherein he seems most to delight: and in the seventeenth page three lines together are taken out of the Remonstrance word for word, not as a citation, but as an author borrows from himself. Whoever it be, he may as justly be said to have libelled, as he against whom he writes: there ye shall find another man than is here made show of, there he bites as fast as this whines. “Vinegar in the ink” is there “the antidote of vipers.” Laughing in a religious controversy is there “a thrifty physic to expel his melancholy.”

43. In the meantime the testimony of Sir Francis Bacon was not misalleged, complaining that libels on the bishops’ part were uttered openly; and if he hoped the prelates had no intelligence with the libellers, he delivers it but as his favour-

tain the cream of innumerable other libels. Scarcely is the character of those religious people yet understood. Sir Walter Scott, in spite of his hostility, has still been instrumental in directing the attention of the public to their history.

able opinion. But had he contradicted himself, how could I assoil him here, more than a little before, where I know not how, by entangling himself, he leaves an aspersion upon Job, which by any else I never heard laid to his charge? For having affirmed that "there is no greater confusion than the confounding of jest and earnest," presently he brings the example of Job, "glancing at conceits of mirth, when he sat among the people with the gravity of a judge upon him." If jest and earnest be such a confusion, then were the people much wiser than Job, for "he smiled, and they believed him not." To defend libels, which is that whereof I am next accused, was far from my purpose. I had not so little share in good name, as to give another that advantage against myself. The sum of what I said was, that a more free permission of writing at some times might be profitable, in such a question especially wherein the magistrates are not fully resolved; and both sides have equal liberty to write, as now they have. Not as when the prelates bore sway, in whose time the books of some men were confuted, when they who should have answered were in close prison, denied the use of pen or paper. (³⁷) And the divine right of episcopacy was then valiantly asserted, when he who would have been respondent must have bethought himself withal how he could refute the Clink or

(³⁷) Hume, no friend to the Puritans, thus explains the origin of this method of confuting: "The same principles of priestly government continuing, after Christianity became the established religion, they have engendered a spirit of persecution, which has

the Gatehouse. (38) If now therefore they be pursued with bad words, who persecuted others with bad deeds, it is a way to lessen tumult rather than to increase it; whenas anger thus freely vented spends itself ere it break out into action, though Machiavel, whom he cites, or any other Machiavellian priest, think the contrary.

44. Now, readers, I bring ye to his third section; wherein very cautiously and no more than needs, lest I should take him for some chaplain at hand, some squire of the body to his prelate, one that serves not at the altar only, but at the court cupboard, he will bestow on us a pretty model of himself; and sobs me out half a dozen phthisical mottoes, wherever he had them, hopping short in the measure of convulsion-fits; in which labour the agony of his wit having escaped narrowly, instead of well-sized periods, he greets us with a quantity of thumb-ring posies. “He has a fortune therefore good, because he is content with it.” This is a piece of sapience not worth the brain of a fruit-trencher; as if content were the measure of what is good or bad in the gift of fortune: for by this rule a bad man may have a good fortune, because he may be oftentimes content with it for many reasons which have no affinity with virtue, as love

ever since been the poison of human society, and the source of the most inveterate factions in every government.”—*Essay on Parties in General*, 4to. p. 40. Even Stillingfleet, when worsted in argument by Locke, seemed to regret that recourse could not be had to physical syllogisms.

(38) The Newgate and Cold-bath Fields of those days.

of ease, want of spirit, (³⁹) to use more, and the like. "And therefore content," he says, "because it neither goes before, nor comes behind his merit." Belike then if his fortune should go before his merit, he would not be content, but resign, if we believe him; which I do the less, because he implies, that if it came behind his merit, he would be content as little. Whereas if a wise man's content should depend upon such a therefore, because his fortune came not behind his merit, how many wise men could have content in this world?

45. In his next pithy symbol I dare not board him, for he passes all the seven wise masters of Greece, attributing to himself that which, on my life, Solomon durst not: "to have affections so equally tempered, that they neither too hastily adhere to the truth before it be fully examined, nor too lazily afterward." Which, unless he only were exempted out of the corrupt mass of Adam, born without sin original, and living without actual, is impossible. Had Solomon, (for it behoves me to instance in the wisest, dealing with such a transcendent sage as this,) had Solomon affections so equally tempered, as "not adhering too lazily to

(³⁹) This is agreeable to what Aristotle, in his Ethics, observes of the difference between the magnanimous and little-minded man; the latter of whom, he says, underrates his own merits; while "the magnanimous man estimates himself at the highest rate, yet no higher than he ought; and, conscious of his inward worth, thinks himself entitled to whatever is most precious, to what the most exalted of men claim as the highest of all rewards."—l. iv. c. 3, of the elegant translation of Dr. Gillies.

the truth," when God warned him of his halting in idolatry? do we read that he repented hastily? did not his affections lead him hastily from an examined truth, how much more would they lead him slowly to it? Yet this man, beyond a stoic apathy, sees truth as in a rapture, and cleaves to it; not as through the dim glass of his affections, which, in this frail mansion of flesh, are ever unequally tempered, pushing forward to error, and keeping back from truth oftentimes the best of men. But how far this boaster is from knowing himself, let his preface speak. Something I thought it was that made him so quicksighted to gather such strange things out of the Animadversions, whereof the least conception could not be drawn from thence, of "suburb-sinks," sometimes "out of wit and clothes," sometimes "in new serge, drinking sack, and swearing;" now I know it was this equal temper of his affections, that gave him to see clearer than any fennel-rubbed serpent.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Lastly, he has resolved "that neither person nor cause shall improper him." I may mistake his meaning, for the word ye hear is "improper." But whether if not a person, yet a good parsonage or impropriation bought out for him, would not "improper" him, because there may be a quirk in the word, I leave it for a canonist to resolve.

(40) It is one of the artifices of Plato's style to make use, in illustration, of the traditions, poetical legends, and vulgar errors of his country; and here we find Milton acting on the same principle, with the design of recommending his works to the people, who love to find in superior men traces of their own ideas.

46. And thus ends this section or rather dissection, of himself, short ye will say both in breadth and extent, as in our own praises it ought to be, unless wherein a good name hath been wrongfully attainted. Right; but if ye look at what he ascribes to himself, “that temper of his affections,” which cannot anywhere be but in Paradise, all the judicious panegyrics in any language extant are not half so prolix. And that well appears in his next removal. For what with putting his fancy to the tiptoe in this description of himself, and what with adventuring presently to stand upon his own legs without the crutches of his margin, which is the sluice most commonly that feeds the drought of his text, he comes so lazily on in a simile, with his “armfull of weeds,” and demeans himself in the dull expression so like a dough-kneaded thing, that he has not spirit enough left him so far to look to his syntax, as to avoid nonsense. For it must be understood there that the stranger, and not he who brings the bundle, would be deceived in censuring the field, which this hipshot grammarian cannot set into right frame of construction, neither here in the similitude, nor in the following reddition thereof; which being to this purpose, that “the faults of the best picked out, and presented in gross, seem monstrous; this,” saith he, “you have done, in pinning on his sleeve the faults of others;” as if to pick out his own faults, and to pin the faults of others upon him, were to do the same thing.

47. To answer therefore how I have culled out the evil actions of the Remonstrant from his vir-

tues, I am acquitted by the dexterity and conveyance of his nonsense, losing that for which he brought his parable. But what of other men's faults I have pinned upon his sleeve, let him show. For whether he were the man who termed the martyrs "Foxian confessors," it matters not; he that shall step up before others to defend a church government, which wants almost no circumstance, but only a name, to be a plain popedom, a government which changes the fatherly and ever-teaching discipline of Christ into that lordly and uninstructioning jurisdiction, which properly makes the pope Antichrist, makes himself an accessory to all the evil committed by those who are armed to do mischief by that undue government; which they, by their wicked deeds, do, with a kind of passive and unwitting obedience to God, destroy; but he, by plausible words and traditions against the Scripture, obstinately seeks to maintain. They, by their own wickedness ruining their own unjust authority, make room for good to succeed; but he, by a show of good upholding the evil which in them undoes itself, hinders the good which they by accident let in. Their manifest crimes serve to bring forth an ensuing good, and hasten a remedy against themselves; and his seeming good tends to reinforce their self-punishing crimes and his own, by doing his best to delay all redress. Shall not all the mischief which other men do be laid to his charge, if they do it by that unchurch-like power which he defends? Christ saith, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathers not with me,

scatters." In what degree of enmity to Christ shall we place that man, then, who so is with him, as that it makes more against him; and so gathers with him, that it scatters more from him? Shall it avail that man to say he honours the martyrs' memory, and treads in their steps? No; the Pharisees confessed as much of the holy prophets. Let him, and such as he, when they are in their best actions, even at their prayers, look to hear that which the Pharisees heard from John the Baptist when they least expected, when they rather looked for praise from him: "Generation of vipers, who hath warned ye to flee from the wrath to come?"

48. Now that ye have started back from the purity of Scripture, which is the only rule of reformation, to the old vomit of your traditions; now that ye have either troubled or leavened the people of God, and the doctrine of the gospel, with scandalous ceremonies and mass-borrowed liturgies, do ye turn the use of that truth which ye profess, to countenance that falsehood which ye gain by? We also reverence the martyrs, but rely only upon the Scriptures. And why we ought not to rely upon the martyrs, I shall be content with such reasons as my confuter himself affords me; who is, I must needs say for him, in that point as officious an adversary as I would wish to any man. For, "first," saith he, "there may be a martyr in a wrong cause, and as courageous in suffering as the best; sometimes in a good cause with a forward ambition displeasing to God. Other whiles

they that story of them out of blind zeal or malice, may write many things of them untruly." If this be so, as ye hear his own confession, with what safety can the Remonstrant rely upon the martyrs as "patrons of his cause," whenas any of those who are alleged for the approvers of our liturgy or prelacy, might have been, though not in a wrong cause, martyrs? Yet whether not vainly ambitious of that honour, or whether not misreported or misunderstood in those their opinions, God only knows. The testimony of what we believe in religion must be such as the conscience may rest on to be infallible and incorruptible, which is only the word of God.

49. His fifth section finds itself aggrieved that the Remonstrant should be taxed with the illegal proceeding of the high commission, and oath *ex officio*: and first, "whether they were illegal or no, it is more than he knows." See this malevolent fox! that tyranny which the whole kingdom cried out against as stung with adders and scorpions, that tyranny which the parliament, in compassion of the church and commonwealth, hath dissolved and fetched up by the roots, for which it hath received the public thanks and blessings of thousands, this obscure thorn-eater of malice and detraction as well as of quodlibets and sophisms, knows not whether it were illegal or not. Evil, evil would be your reward, ye worthies of the parliament, if this sophister and his accomplices had the censuring or the sounding forth of your labours. And that the Remonstrant cannot wash his hands of all the

cruelties exercised by the prelates, is past doubting. They scourged the confessors of the gospel, and he held the scourgers' garments. They executed their rage; and he, if he did nothing else, defended the government with the oath that did it, and the ceremonies which were the cause of it:—does he think to be counted guiltless?

50. In the following section I must foretel ye, readers, the doings will be rough and dangerous, the baiting of a satire. And if the work seem more trivial or boisterous than for this discourse, let the Remonstrant thank the folly of this confuter, who could not let a private word pass, but he must make all this blaze of it. I had said, that because the Remonstrant was so much offended with those who were tart against the prelates, sure he loved toothless satires, which I took were as improper as a toothed sleekstone. This champion from behind the arras (⁽⁴⁾) cries out, that those toothless satires were of the Remonstrant's making; and arms himself here tooth and nail, and horn to boot, to supply the want of teeth, or rather of gums in the satires. And for an onset tells me, that the simile of a sleekstone "shows I can be as bold with a prelate as familiar with a laundress." But does it not argue rather the lascivious promptness of his own fancy, who, from the harmless mention of a sleekstone, could neigh out the remembrance of his old conversation among the

(⁴) Alluding to the scene in Hamlet, where Polonius en-sconces himself behind the arras, to watch the conduct of the prince during the interview with his mother.

viragian trollops? For me, if he move me, I shall claim his own oath, the oath *ex officio* against any priest or prelate in the kingdom, to have ever as much hated such pranks as the best and chastest of them all. That exception which I made against toothless satires, the confuter hopes I had from the satirist, but is far deceived: neither have I ever read the hobbling distich which he means.

51. For this good hap I had from a careful education, to be inured and seasoned betimes with the best and elegantest authors of the learned tongues, and thereto brought an ear that could measure a just cadence, and sean without articulating: rather nice and humourous in what was tolerable, than patient to read every drawling versifier. Whence lighting upon this title of "toothless satires," I will not conceal ye what I thought, readers, that sure this must be some sucking satyr, who might have done better to have used his coral, and made an end of teething, ere he took upon him to wield a satire's whip. But when I heard him talk of "scouring the rusty swords of elvish knights," do not blame me, if I changed my thought, and concluded him some desperate cutler. But why "his scornful muse could never abide with tragic shoes her ancles for to hide," the pace of the verse told me that her mawkin knuckles were never shapen to that royal buskin. And turning by chance to the sixth satire of his second book, I was confirmed; where having begun loftily "in Heaven's universal alphabet," he falls down to that wretched poorness and frigidity, as to talk of "Bridge-street in Hea-

ven, and the Ostler of Heaven," and there wanting other matter to catch him a heat, (for certain he was in the frozen zone miserably benumbed,) with thoughts lower than any beadle betakes him to whip the signposts of Cambridge alehouses, the ordinary subject of freshmen's tales, and in a strain as pitiful. Which for him who would be counted the first English satire, to abase himself to, who might have learned better among the Latin and Italian satirists, and in our own tongue from the "Vision and Creed of Pierce P^lowman," besides others before him, manifested a presumptuous undertaking with weak and unexamined shoulders. For a satire as it was born out of a tragedy,(42) so ought to resemble his parentage, to strike high, and adventure dangerously at the most eminent vices among the greatest persons, and not to creep into every blind tap-house, that fears a constable more than a satire. But that such a poem should be toothless, I still affirm it to be a bull,(43) taking away the essence of that which it calls itself. For if it bite neither the persons sons nor vices, how is it a satire? And if it bite either, how is it tooth-

(42) He here adopts the idea, advanced by Aristotle, (*Poet.* i. §. 7.) that satire sprung out of the old form of tragedy. But the Greek satyres were a species of farce, as we may judge from the Cyclops of Euripides, and had little in common with what was denominated satire among the Romans. "Satyra — Fuit ejusmodi, ut in ea, quamvis duro et agresti joco, tamen vitia hominum, sine ullo proprii nominis titulo, carperentur, atque per scirpos, et ænigmata, magna^e res describerentur."—*De Theatro, Tract. Var. Lat.—Conf. Rigalt. Dissert. de Satyr. Juvenal.*

(43) Milton is the oldest author in whom we have discovered the jocular substitution of *bull* for *blunder*.

less? So that toothless satires are as much as if he had said toothless teeth. What we should do therefore with this learned comment upon teeth and horns, which hath brought this confutant into his pedantic kingdom of Cornucopia, to reward him for glossing upon horns even to the Hebrew root, I know not; unless we should commend him to be lecturer in Eastcheap upon St. Luke's day, when they send their tribute to that famous haven by Deptford. But we are not like to escape him so. For now the worm of criticism works in him, he will us the derivation of "German rutters, of meat, and of ink," which doubtless, rightly applied with some gall in it, may prove good to heal this tetter of pedagogism that bespreads him, with such a tenesmus of originating, that if he be an Arminian, and deny original sin, all the etymologies of his book shall witness, that his brain is not meanly tainted with that infection.

52. His seventh section labours to cavil out the flaws which were found in the Remonstrant's logic; who having laid down for a general proposition, that "civil polity is variable and arbitrary," from whence was inferred logically upon him, that he had concluded the polity of England to be arbitrary, for general includes particular; here his defendant is not ashamed to confess, that the Remonstrant's proposition was sophistical by a fallacy called *ad plures interrogaciones*: which sounds to me somewhat strange, that a Remonstrant of that pretended sincerity should bring deceitful and double-dealing propositions to the parliament.

The truth is, he had let slip a shrewd passage ere he was aware, not thinking the conclusion would turn upon him with such a terrible edge, and not knowing how to wind out of the briars, he, or his substitute, seems more willing to lay the integrity of his logic to pawn, and grant a fallacy in his own major, where none is, than to be forced to uphold the inference. For that distinction of possible and lawful, is ridiculous to be sought for in that proposition; no man doubting that it is possible to change the form of civil polity; and that it is held lawful by that major, the word “arbitrary” implies. Nor will this help him, to deny that it is arbitrary, “at any time, or by any undertakers,” (which are the limitations invented by him since,) for when it stands as he will have it now by his second edition, “civil polity is variable, but not at any time, or by any undertakers,” it will result upon him, belike then at some time, and by some undertakers it may. And so he goes on mincing the matter, till he meets with something in Sir Francis Bacon; then he takes heart again, and holds his major at large. But by and by, as soon as the shadow of Sir Francis hath left him, he falls off again, warping and warping, till he come to contradict himself in diameter; and denies flatly that it is “either variable or arbitrary, being once settled.” Which third shift is no less a piece of laughter: for, before the polity was settled, how could it be variable, whenas it was no polity at all, but either an anarchy or a tyranny? That limitation therefore, of after-settling, is a mere tautology. So that, in fine,

his former assertion is now recanted, and “civil polity is neither variable nor arbitrary.”

53. Whatever else may persuade me, that this confutation was not made without some assistance or advice of the Remonstrant, yet in this eighth section that his hand was not greatly intermixed, I can easily believe. For it begins with this surmise, that “not having to accuse the Remonstrant to the king, I do it to the parliament :” which conceit of the man clearly shoves the king out of the parliament, and makes two bodies of one. Whereas the Remonstrant, in the epistle to his last “Short Answer,” gives his supposal, “that they cannot be severed in the rights of their several concernments.” Mark, readers, if they cannot be severed in what is several, (which casts a bull’s eye to go yoke with the toothless satires,) how should they be severed in their common concernments, the welfare of the land, by due accusation of such as are the common grievances, among which I took the Remonstrant to be one ? And therefore if I accused him to the parliament, it was the same as to accuse him to the king.

54. Next he casts it into the dish of I know not whom, “that they flatter some of the house, and libel others whose consciences made them vote contrary to some proceedings.” Those some proceedings can be understood of nothing else but the deputy’s execution. (⁴⁴) And can this private concoctor of malecontent, at the very instant when he

(⁴⁴) The Earl of Strafford’s execution in 1640.

pretends to extol the parliament, afford thus to blur over, rather than to mention that public triumph of their justice and constancy, so high, so glorious, so reviving to the fainted commonwealth, with such a suspicious and murmuring expression as to call it some proceedings? And yet immediately he falls to glossing, as if he were the only man that rejoiced at these times. But I shall discover to ye, readers, that this his praising of them is as full of nonsense and scholastic foppery, as his meaning he himself discovers to be full of close malignity. His first encomium is, "that the sun looks not upon a braver, nobler convocation than is that of king, peers, and commons."

55. One thing I beg of ye, readers, as ye bear any zeal to learning, to elegance, and that which is called decorum in the writing of praise, especially on such a noble argument, ye would not be offended, though I rate this cloistered lubber according to his deserts. Where didst thou learn to be so aguish, so pusillanimous, thou losel bachelor of art, as against all custom and use of speech to term the high and sovereign court of parliament, a convocation? Was this the flower of all the synonimas and voluminous papers, whose best folios are predestined to no better end than to make winding sheets in lent for pilchers?⁽⁴⁵⁾ Couldst thou presume thus, with one word's speaking, to clap, as it were under hatches, the king with all his peers and

(45) They still continued to eat fish in Lent, like the Roman Catholics.

gentry into square caps and monkish hoods? How well dost thou now appear to be a chip of the old block, that could find “Bridge Street and alehouses in heaven?” Why didst thou not, to be his perfect imitator, liken the king to the vice-chancellor, and the lords to the doctors? Neither is this an indignity only, but a reproach, to call that inviolable residence of justice and liberty by such an odious name as now a “convocation” is become, which would be nothing injured, though it were styled the house of bondage, whereout so many cruel tasks, so many unjust burdens have been laden upon the bruised consciences of so many Christians throughout the land.

56. But which of those worthy deeds, whereof we and our posterity must confess this parliament to have done so many and so noble, which of those memorable acts comes first into his praises? None of all, not one. What will he then praise them for? Not for any thing doing, but for deferring to do, for deferring to chastise his lewd and insolent compriests: not that they have deferred all, but that he hopes they will remit what is yet behind. For the rest of his oratory that follows, so just is it in the language of stall epistle nonsense, that if he who made it can understand it, I deny not but that he may deserve for his pains a cast doublet. When a man would look he should vent something of his own, as ever in a set speech the manner is with him that knows any thing; he, lest we should not take notice enough of his barren stupidity, declares it by alphabet, and refers us to odd remnants in his

topics. Nor yet content with the wonted room of his margin, but he must cut out large docks and creeks into his text, to unlade the foolish frigate of his unseasonable authorities, not therewith to praise the parliament, but to tell them what he would have them do. What else there is, he jumbles together in such a lost construction, as no man, either lettered or unlettered, will be able to piece up. I shail spare to transcribe him, but if I do him wrong let me be so dealt with.

57. Now although it be a digression from the ensuing matter, yet because it shall not be said I am apter to blame others than to make trial myself, and that I may, after this harsh discord, touch upon a smoother string, awhile to entertain myself and him that list, with some more pleasing fit, and not the least to testify the gratitude which I owe to those public benefactors of their country, for the share I enjoy in the common peace and good by their incessant labours; I shall be so troublesome to this disclaimer for once, as to show him what he might have better said in their praise; wherein I must mention only some few things of many, for more than that to a digression may not be granted. Although certainly their actions are worthy not thus to be spoken of by the way, yet if hereafter it besal me to attempt something more answerable to their great merits, I perceive how hopeless it will be to reach the height of their praises at the accomplishment of that expectation that waits upon their noble deeds, the unfinished whereof already surpasses what others before them have left enacted

with their utmost performance through many ages. And to the end we may be confident that what they do proceeds neither from uncertain opinion nor sudden counsels, but from mature wisdom, deliberate virtue, and dear affection to the public good, I shall begin at that which made them likeliest in the eyes of good men to effect those things for the recovery of decayed religion and the commonwealth, which they who were best minded had long wished for, but few, as the times then were desperate, had the courage to hope for.

58. First, therefore, the most of them being either of ancient and high nobility, or at least of known and well-reputed ancestry, which is a great advantage towards virtue one way,⁽⁴⁶⁾ but in respect of wealth, ease, and flattery, which accompany a nice

(⁴⁶) Aristotle, a favourite author with Milton, remarks, in speaking of nobility, that “high birth is the accumulated honour of ancestry, which their descendants are ambitious of piling up to greater heights: the further back it extends, nobility is deemed the more illustrious, *so that the old nobles are often filled with contempt for men resembling those with whom their own honours began.* Noble birth is a thing altogether different from native nobility of character. The former rests solely on the glory of our ancestors; the latter is our own work, when, by upholding that glory, we have rendered it appropriate and personal. This, indeed, seldom happens; for noble races are exhausted like luxuriant soils. During a certain time, the sons will emulate, perhaps surpass, the virtues of their fathers; but at length the current of honour dries up, or is turned back; and families decline, fall, and sink from one degree of degeneracy into another still deeper. Of those most distinguished by spirit, fire, and energy, the posterity often degenerate into fools.” ii. 15. Modern times furnish numerous examples of the truth of this observation.

and tender education, is as much a hinderance another way : the good which lay before them they took, in imitating the worthiest of their progenitors : and the evil which assaulted their younger years by the temptation of riches, high birth, and that usual bringing up, perhaps too favourable and too remiss, through the strength of an inbred goodness, and with the help of divine grace, that had marked them out for no mean purposes, they nobly overcame. Yet had they a greater danger to cope with ; for being trained up in the knowledge of learning, and sent to those places which were intended to be the seed-plots of piety and the liberal arts, but were become the nurseries of superstition and empty speculation, as they were prosperous against those vices which grow upon youth out of idleness and superfluity, so were they happy in working off the harms of their abused studies and labours ; correcting, by the clearness of their own judgment, the errors of their misinstruction, and were, as David was, wiser than their teachers. And although their lot fell into such times, and to be bred in such places, where if they chanced to be taught any thing good, or of their own accord had learnt it, they might see that presently untaught them by the custom and ill example of their elders ; so far in all probability was their youth from being misled by the single power of example, as their riper years were known to be unmoved with the baits of preferment, and undaunted for any discouragement and terror, which appeared often to those that loved religion and their native liberty ;

which two things God hath inseparably knit together, and hath disclosed to us, that they who seek to corrupt our religion, are the same that would enthrall our civil liberty.

59. Thus in the midst of all disadvantages and disrespects, (some also at last not without imprisonment and open disgraces in the cause of their country,) having given proof of themselves to be better made and framed by nature to the love and practice of virtue, than others under the holiest precepts and best examples have been headstrong and prone to vice ; and having, in all the trials of a firm ingrafted honesty, not oftener buckled in the conflict than given every opposition the foil ; this moreover was added by favour from heaven, as an ornament and happiness to their virtue, that it should be neither obscure in the opinion of men, nor eclipsed for want of matter equal to illustrate itself ; God and man consenting in joint approbation to choose them out as worthiest above others to be both the great reformers of the church, and the restorers of the commonwealth. Nor did they deceive that expectation which with the eyes and desires of their country was fixed upon them : for no sooner did the force of so much united excellence meet in one globe of brightness and efficacy, but encountering the dazzled resistance of tyranny, they gave not over, though their enemies were strong and subtle, till they had laid her grovelling upon the fatal block ; with one stroke winning again our lost liberties and charters, which our forefathers after so many battles could scarce maintain.

60. And meeting next, as I may so resemble, with the second life of tyranny, (for she was grown an ambiguous monster, and to be slain in two shapes,) guarded with superstition, which hath no small power to captivate the minds of men otherwise most wise, they neither were taken with her mitred hypocrisy, nor terrified with the push of her bestial horns, but breaking them, immediately forced her to unbend the pontifical brow, and recoil ; which repulse only given to the prelates (that we may imagine how happy their removal would be) was the producement of such glorious effects and consequences in the church, that if I should compare them with those exploits of highest fame in poems and panegyrics of old, I am certain it would but diminish and impair their worth, who are now my argument ; for those ancient worthies delivered men from such tyrants as were content to enforce only an outward obedience, letting the mind be as free as it could ; but these have freed us from a doctrine of tyranny, that offered violence and corruption even to the inward persuasion. They set at liberty nations and cities of men good and bad mixed together ; but these, opening the prisons and dungeons, called out of darkness and bonds the elect martyrs and witnesses of their Redeemer. They restored the body to ease and wealth ; but these, the oppressed conscience to that freedom which is the chief prerogative of the gospel ; taking off those cruel burdens imposed not by necessity, as other tyrants are wont or the safeguard of their lives, but laid upon our

necks by the strange wilfulness and wantonness of a needless and jolly persecutor, called Indifference. Lastly, some of those ancient deliverers have had immortal praises for preserving their citizens from a famine of corn. But these, by this only repulse of an unholy hierarchy, almost in a moment replenished with saving knowledge their country, nigh famished for want of that which should feed their souls. All this being done while two armies in the field stood gazing on, the one in reverence of such nobleness quietly gave back and dislodged; the other, spite of the unruliness, and doubted fidelity in some regiments, was either persuaded or compelled to disband and retire home.

61. With such a majesty had their wisdom begirt itself, that whereas others had levied war to subdue a nation that sought for peace, they sitting here in peace could so many miles extend the force of their single words, as to overawe the dissolute stoutness of an armed power, secretly stirred up and almost hired against them. And having by a solemn protestation vowed themselves and the kingdom anew to God and his service, and by a prudent foresight above what their fathers thought on, prevented the dissolution and frustrating of their designs by an untimely breaking up; (⁴⁷) notwithstanding all the

(⁴⁷) Charles I. had been accustomed to dissolve those Parliaments which withheld his tyranny, or refused to gratify him with the plunder of the country. For many years he and his court subsisted upon fines illegally imposed. See in Rushworth (vol. i. and ii.) and in Guisot, (*Histoire de la Revolution de l'Angleterre*, p. 397—399,) a list of the principal fines, which from 1629 to 1640 amounted to 173,650 pounds sterling.

treasonous plots against them, all the rumours either of rebellion or invasion, they have not been yet brought to change their constant resolution, ever to think fearlessly of their own safeties, and hopefully of the commonwealth : which hath gained them such an admiration from all good men, that now they hear it as their ordinary surname, to be saluted the fathers of their country, and sit as gods among daily petitions and public thanks flowing in upon them. Which doth so little yet exalt them in their own thoughts, that, with all gentle affability and courteous acceptance, they both receive and return that tribute of thanks which is tendered them ; testifying their zeal and desire to spend themselves as it were piece-meal upon the grievances and wrongs of their distressed nation ; insomuch that the meanest artisans and labourers, at other times also women, (⁴⁸) and often the younger sort of servants assembling with their complaints, and that sometimes in a less humble guise than for petitioners, have gone with confidence, that neither their meanness would be rejected, nor their simplicity contemned ; nor yet their urgency distasted either by the dignity, wisdom or moderation of that supreme senate ; nor did they depart unsatisfied.

62. And indeed, if we consider the general concourse of suppliants, the free and ready admittance, the willing and speedy redress in what is possible, it will not seem much otherwise, than as if some

(⁴⁸) This trait in the character of the Long Parliament must always belong to a genuine republican government.

divine commission from heaven were descended to take into hearing and commiseration the long and remediless afflictions of this kingdom; were it not that none more than themselves labour to remove and divert such thoughts, lest men should place too much confidence in their persons, still referring us and our prayers to him that can grant all, and appointing the monthly return of public fasts and supplications. Therefore the more they seek to humble themselves, the more does God, by manifest signs and testimonies, visibly honour their proceedings; and sets them as the mediators of this his covenant, which he offers us to renew. Wicked men daily conspire their hurt, and it comes to nothing; rebellion rages in our Irish province, but, with miraculous and lossless victories of few against many, is daily discomfited and broken; if we neglect not this early pledge of God's inclining towards us, by the slackness of our needful aids. And whereas at other times we count it ample honour when God vouchsafes to make man the instrument and subordinate worker of his gracious will, such acceptation have their prayers found with him, that to them he hath been pleased to make himself the agent, and immediate performer of their desires; dissolving their difficulties when they are thought inexplicable, cutting out ways for them where no passage could be seen; as who is there so regardless of divine Providence, that from late occurrences will not confess? If therefore it be so high a grace when men are preferred to be but the inferior officers of good things from God, what is it

when God himself condescends, and works with his own hands to fulfil the requests of men? Which I leave with them as the greatest praise that can belong to human nature: not that we should think they are at the end of their glorious progress, but that they will go on to follow his Almighty leading, who seems to have thus covenanted with them; that if the will and the endeavour shall be theirs, the performance and the perfecting shall be his. Whence only it is that I have not feared, though many wise men have miscarried in praising great designs before the utmost event, because I see who is their assistant, who is their confederate, who hath engaged his omnipotent arm to support and crown with success their faith, their fortitude, their just and magnanimous actions, till he have brought to pass all that expected good which, his servants trust, is in his thoughts to bring upon this land in the full and perfect reformation of his church.

63. Thus far I have digressed, readers, from my former subject; but into such a path, as I doubt not ye will agree with me, to be much fairer and more delightful than the roadway I was in. And how to break off suddenly into those jarring notes which this confuter hath set me, I must be wary, unless I can provide against offending the ear, as some musicians are wont skilfully to fall out of one key into another, without breach of harmony. By good luck therefore his ninth section is spent in mournful elegy, certain passionate soliloquies, and two whole pages of interrogatories that praise the

Remonstrant even to the sonneting of “ his fresh cheek, quick eyes, round tongue, agile hand, and nimble invention.”

64. In his tenth section he will needs erect figures, and tell fortunes: “ I am no bishop,” he says; “ I was never born to it.” Let me tell therefore this wizard, since he calculates so right, that he may know there be in the world, and I among those, who nothing admire his idol—a bishopric; and hold that it wants so much to be a blessing, as that I rather deem it the merest, the falsest, the most unfortunate gift of fortune. And were the punishment and misery of being a prelate bishop terminated only in the person, and did not extend to the affliction of the whole diocess, if I would wish any thing in the bitterness of soul to mine enemy, I would wish him the biggest and fattest bishopric. But he proceeds; and the familiar be-like informs him, that “ a rich widow, or a lecture, or both, would content me:” whereby I perceive him to be more ignorant in his art of divining than any gipsy. For this I cannot omit without ingratitude to that Providence above, who hath ever bred me up in plenty, although my life hath not been unexpensive in learning, and voyaging about; so long as it shall please him to lend me what he hath hitherto thought good, which is enough to serve me in all honest and liberal occasions, and something over besides, I were unthankful to that highest bounty, if I should make myself so poor, as to solicit needily any such kind of rich hopes as this fortune-teller dreams of. And that he may further

learn how his astrology is wide all the houses of heaven in spelling marriages, I care not if I tell him thus much professedly, though it be the losing of my rich hopes, as he calls them, that I think with them who, both in prudence and elegance of spirit, would choose a virgin of mean fortunes, honestly bred, before the wealthiest widow. (⁴⁹) The fiend therefore that told our Chaldean the contrary, was a lying fiend.

65. His next venom he utters against a prayer, which he found in the Animadversions, angry it seems to find any prayers but in the service-book ; he dislikes it, and I therefore like it the better. "It was theatrical," he says ; and yet it consisted most of Scripture language ; it had no rubric to be sung in an antic cope upon the stage of a high altar. "It was big-mouthed," he says ; no marvel, if it were framed as the voice of three kingdoms ; neither was it a prayer, so much as a hymn in prose, frequent both in the prophets, and in human authors ; therefore the style was greater than for an

(⁴⁹) Milton's three wives were virgins. "Mr. Todd," says Mr. Mitford, "considers it worthy of observation, that Milton chose his three wives out of the virgin state; while Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, selected his three from that of widowhood: but what inference the learned biographer would draw from their respective choices, is, from an entire ignorance on these subjects, to me unknown!" This is the amiable simplicity of a bachelor. Mr. Todd would evidently draw this inference :—that the poet was a man of delicacy, the duke altogether the reverse. Mr. Mitford's own explanation, however, is not amiss : "Sheffield was probably looking out for a splendid jointure, and Milton for a gentle, *virtuous*, and attached companion."—*Life of Milton*, p. 70.

ordinary prayer. “ It was an astonishing prayer.” I thank him for that confession, so it was intended to astound and to astonish the guilty prelates ; and this confuter confesses, that with him it wrought that effect. But in that which follows, he does not play the soothsayer, but the diabolic slanderer of prayers. “ It was made,” he says, “ not so much to please God, or to benefit the weal public,” (how dares the viper judge that ?) “ but to intimate,” saith he, “ your good abilities to her that is your rich hopes, your Maronilla.”

66. How hard is it when a man meets with a fool to keep his tongue from folly ! That were miserable indeed to be a courtier of Maronilla, and withal of such a hapless invention, as that no way should be left me to present my meaning but to make myself a canting probationer of orisons. The Remonstrant, when he was young as I, could

“ Teach each hollow grove to sound his love,
Wearying echo with one changeless word.”

Toothless Satires.

And so he well might, and all his auditory besides, with his “ teach each.”

“ Whether so me list my lovely thoughts to sing,
Come dance ye nimble dryads by my side,
Whiles I report my fortunes or my loves.”

Toothless Satires.

67. Delicious ! he had that whole bevy at command whether in morrice or at maypole ; whilst I by this figure-caster must be imagined in such distress as to sue to Maronilla, and yet left so impo-

verished of what to say, as to turn my liturgy into my lady's psalter. Believe it, graduate, I am not altogether so rustic, and nothing so irreligious, but as far distant from a lecturer as the merest laic, for any consecrating hand of a prelate that shall ever touch me. Yet I shall not decline the more for that, to speak my opinion in the controversy next moved, "whether the people may be allowed for competent judges of a minister's ability." For how else can be fulfilled that which God hath promised, to pour out such abundance of knowledge upon all sorts of men in the times of the gospel? How should the people examine the doctrine which is taught them, as Christ and his apostles continually bid them do? How should they "discern and beware of false prophets, and try every spirit," if they must be thought unfit to judge of the minister's abilities? The apostles ever laboured to persuade the Christian flock, that they "were called in Christ to all perfectness of spiritual knowledge, and full assurance of understanding in the mystery of God." But the non-resident and plurality-gaping prelates, the gulfs and whirlpools of benefices, but the dry pits of all sound doctrine, that they may the better preach what they list to their sheep, are still possessing them that they are sheep indeed, without judgment, without understanding, "the very beasts of mount Sinai," as this confuter calls them; which words of theirs may serve to condemn them out of their own mouths, and to show the gross contrarieties that are in their opinions. For while none think the people so void of

knowledge as the prelates think them, none are so backward and malignant as they to bestow knowledge upon them; both by suppressing the frequency of sermons, and the printed explanations of the English Bible.

68. No marvel if the people turn beasts, when their teachers themselves, as Isaiah calls them, “are dumb and greedy dogs that can never have enough, ignorant, blind, and cannot understand; who, while they all look their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter,” how many parts of the land are fed with windy ceremonies instead of sincere milk; and while one prelate enjoys the nourishment and right of twenty ministers, how many waste places are left as dark as “Galilee of the Gentiles, sitting in the region and shadow of death,” without preaching minister, without light. So little care they of beasts to make them men, that by their sorcerous doctrine of formalities, they take the way to transform them out of Christian men into judaizing beasts. Had they but taught the land, or suffered it to be taught, as Christ would it should have been in all plenteous dispensation of the word; then the poor mechanic might have so accustomed his ear to good teaching, as to have discerned between faithful teachers and false. But now, with a most inhuman cruelty, they who have put out the people’s eyes, reproach them of their blindness; just as the Pharisees their true fathers were wont, who could not endure that the people should be thought competent judges of Christ’s doctrine, although we know they judged far better

than those great rabbis: yet “this people,” said they, “that knows not the law is accursed.”

69. We need not the authority of Pliny brought to tell us, the people cannot judge of a minister: yet that hurts not. For as none can judge of a painter, or statuary, but he who is an artist, that is, either in the practice or theory, which is often separated from the practice, and judges learnedly without it; so none can judge of a Christian teacher, but he who hath either the practice, or the knowledge of Christian religion, though not so artfully digested in him. And who almost of the meanest Christians hath not heard the Scriptures often read from his childhood, besides so many sermons and lectures, more in number than any student hath heard in philosophy, whereby he may easily attain to know when he is wisely taught, and when weakly? whereof three ways I remember are set down in Scripture; the one is to read often that best of books written to this purpose, that not the wise only, but the simple and ignorant, may learn by them; the other way to know of a minister is, by the life he leads, whereof the meanest understanding may be apprehensive. The last way to judge aright in this point is, when he who judges, lives a Christian life himself. Which of these three will the confuter affirm to exceed the capacity of a plain artisan? And what reason then is there left, wherefore he should be denied his voice in the election of his minister, as not thought a competent discerner?

70. It is but arrogance therefore, and the pride

of a metaphysical fume, to think that “the mutinous rabble”⁽⁵⁰⁾ (for so he calls the Christian congregation) “would be so mistaken in a clerk of the university,” that were to be their minister. I doubt me those clerks, that think so, are more mistaken in themselves; and what with truanting and debauchery, what with false grounds and the weakness of natural faculties in many of them, (it being a maxim in some men to send the simplest of their sons thither,) perhaps there would be found among them as many unsolid and corrupted judgments, both in doctrine and life, as in any other two corporations of like bigness. This is undoubted, that if any carpenter, smith, or weaver were such a bungler in his trade, as the greater number of them are in their profession, he would starve for any custom. And should he exercise his manufacture as little as they do their talents, he would forget his art; and should he mistake his tools as they do theirs, he would mar all the work he took in hand. How few among them that know to write, or speak in a pure style; much less to distinguish the ideas and various kinds of style in Latin barbarous, and oft not without solecisms, declaiming in rugged and

(50) Edwards, the adversary of Locke, felt, like bishop Hall’s son, the greatest contempt for the people of England, or the “mutinous rabble,” as the modest confuter denominates them. He had forgotten in what light our Saviour viewed the poor, the preaching of the gospel to whom he made one of the distinguishing signs of his ministry. He used to frequent the society of the “mutinous rabble,” endeavouring to enlighten and reclaim them; and therefore incurred the displeasure of the proud Pharisees, the “modest confuters” of those days.

miscellaneous gear blown together by the four winds, and in their choice preferring the gay rankness of Apuleius, Arnobius, or any modern fustianist, before the native Latinisms of Cicero. In the Greek tongue most of them unlettered, or “ unentered to any sound proficiency in those Attic masters of moral wisdom and eloquence.” In the Hebrew text, which is so necessary to be understood, except it be some few of them, their lips are utterly uncircumcised.

71. No less are they out of the way in philosophy, pestering their heads with the sapless dotages of old Paris and Salamanca. And that which is the main point, in their sermons affecting the comments and postils of friars and Jesuits, but scorning and slighting the reformed writers; insomuch that the better sort among them will confess it a rare matter to hear a true edifying sermon in either of their great churches: and that such as are most hummed and applauded there, would scarcely be suffered the second hearing in a grave congregation of pious Christians. Is there cause why these men should overwean, and be so queasy of the rude multitude, lest their deep worth should be undervalued for want of fit umpires? No, my matriculated confutant, there will not want in any congregation of this island, that hath not been altogether famished or wholly perverted with prelatish leaven; there will not want divers plain and solid men, that have learned by the experience of a good conscience, what it is to be well taught, who will soon look through and through both the lofty

nakedness of your Latinizing barbarian, and the finical goosery of your neat sermon actor. And so I leave you and your fellow “stars,” as you term them, “of either horizon,” meaning I suppose either hemisphere, unless you will be ridiculous in your astronomy: for the rational horizon in heaven is but one, and the sensible horizons in earth are innumerable; so that your allusion was as erroneous as your stars. But that you did well to prognosticate them all at lowest in the horizon; that is, either seeming bigger than they are through the mist and vapour which they raise, or else sinking and wasted to the snuff in their western socket.

72. His eleventh section intends I know not what, unless to clog us with the residue of his phlegmatic sloth, discussing with a heavy pulse the “expediency of set forms;” which no question but to some, and for some time may be permitted, and perhaps there may be usefully set forth by the church a common directory of public prayer, especially in the administration of the sacraments. But that it should therefore be enforced where both minister and people profess to have no need, but to be scandalized by it, that, I hope, every sensible Christian will deny: and the reasons of such denial the confuter himself, as his bounty still is to his adversary, will give us out of his affirmation. First, saith he, “God in his providence hath chosen some to teach others, and pray for others, as ministers and pastors.” Whence I gather, that however the faculty of others may be, yet that they whom God hath set apart to his ministry, are by him endued with

an ability of prayer; because their office is to pray for others, and not to be the lip-working deacons of other men's appointed words. Nor is it easily credible, that he who can preach well, should be unable to pray well; whenas it is indeed the same ability to speak affirmatively, or doctrinally, and only by changing the mood, to speak prayingly.

73. In vain therefore do they pretend to want utterance in prayer, who can find utterance to preach. And if prayer be the gift of the Spirit, why do they admit those to the ministry who want a main gift of their function, and prescribe gifted men to use that which is the remedy of another man's want; setting them their tasks to read, whom the Spirit of God stands ready to assist in his ordinance with the gift of free conceptions? What if it be granted to the infirmity of some ministers (though such seem rather to be half ministers) to help themselves with a set form, shall it therefore be urged upon the plenteous graces of others? And let it be granted to some people while they are babes in Christian gifts, were it not better to take it away soon after, as we do loitering books and interlineary translations from children; to stir up and exercise that portion of the Spirit which is in them, and not impose it upon congregations who not only deny to need it, but as a thing troublesome and offensive, refuse it?

74. Another reason which he brings for liturgy, is "the preserving of order, unity, and piety;" and the same shall be my reason against liturgy. For I, readers, shall always be of this opinion, that

obedience to the Spirit of God, rather than to the fair seeming pretences of men, is the best and most dutiful order that a Christian can observe. If the Spirit of God manifest the gift of prayer in his minister, what more seemly order in the congregation than to go along with that man in our devoutest affections? For him to abridge himself by reading, and to forestall himself in those petitions, which he must either omit, or vainly repeat, when he comes into the pulpit under a show of order, is the greatest disorder. Nor is unity less broken, especially by our liturgy, though this author would almost bring the communion of saints to a communion of liturgical words. For what other reformed church holds communion with us by our liturgy, and does not rather dislike it? And among ourselves, who knows it not to have been a perpetual cause of disunion?

75. Lastly, it hinders piety rather than sets it forward, being more apt to weaken the spiritual faculties, if the people be not weaned from it in due time; as the daily pouring in of hot waters quenches the natural heat. For not only the body and the mind, but also the improvement of God's Spirit, is quickened by using. Whereas they who will ever adhere to liturgy, bring themselves in the end to such a pass, by overmuch leaning, as to lose even the legs of their devotion. These inconveniences and dangers follow the compelling of set forms: but that the toleration of the English liturgy now in use is more dangerous than the compelling of any other, which the reformed churches use,

these reasons following may evince. To contend that it is fantastical, if not senseless in some places, were a copious argument, especially in the Responsories. For such alternations as are there used must be by several persons; but the minister and the people cannot so sever their interests, as to sustain several persons; he being the only mouth of the whole body which he presents. And if the people pray, he being silent, or they ask any one thing, and he another, it either changes the property, making the priest the people, and the people the priest, by turns, or else makes two persons and two bodies representative where there should be but one. Which, if it be nought else, must needs be a strange quaintness in ordinary prayer.

76. The like, or worse, may be said of the litany, wherein neither priest nor people speak any entire sense of themselves throughout the whole, I know not what to name it; only by the timely contribution of their parted stakes, closing up, as it were, the schism of a sliced prayer, they pray not in vain, for by this means they keep life between them in a piece of gasping sense, and keep down the sauciness of a continual rebounding nonsense. And hence it is, that as it hath been far from the imitation of any warranted prayer, so we all know it hath been obvious to be the pattern of many a jig. And he who hath but read in good books of devotion and no more, cannot be so either of ear or judgment unpractised to distinguish what is grave, pathetical, devout, and what not, but will presently perceive this liturgy all over in conception lean and dry, of

affections empty and unmoving, of passion, or any height whereto the soul might soar upon the wings of zeal, destitute and barren ; besides errors, tautologies, impertinencies, as those thanks in the woman's churching for her delivery from sunburning and moonblasting, (⁵¹) as if she had been travailing not in her bed, but in the deserts of Arabia.

77. So that while some men cease not to admire the incomparable frame of our liturgy, I cannot but admire as fast what they think is become of judgment and taste in other men, that they can hope to be heard without laughter. And if this were all, perhaps it were a compliable matter. But when we remember this our liturgy, where we found it, whence we had it, and yet where we left it, still serving to all the abominations of the antichristian temple, it may be wondered how we can demur whether it should be done away or no, and not rather fear we have highly offended in using it so long. It hath indeed been pretended to be more ancient than the mass, but so little proved, that whereas other corrupt liturgies have had withal such a seeming antiquity, as that their publishers have ventured to ascribe them, with their worst corruptions, either to St. Peter, St. James, St. Mark, or at least to Chrysostom or Basil, ours hath been never able to find either age or author allowable, on

(⁵¹) This portion of the churching of women is no longer found in our Common Prayer Books ; but at what time it was omitted I have been unable to discover.

whom to father those things therein which are least offensive, except the two creeds, for Te Deum has a smatch in it of Limbus Patrum : as if Christ had not “ opened the kingdom of heaven” before he had “ overcome the sharpness of death.” So that having received it from the papal church as an original creature, for aught can be shown to the contrary, formed and fashioned by workmasters ill to be trusted, we may be assured that if God loathe the best of an idolater’s prayer, much more the conceited fangle of his praise.

78. This confuter himself confesses that a community of the same set form in prayers, is that which “ makes church and church truly one;” we then using a liturgy far more like to the mass-book than to any Protestant set form, by his own words must have more communion with the Romish church, than with any of the reformed. How can we then not partake with them the curse and vengeance of their superstition, to whom we come so near in the same set form and dress of our devotion ? Do we think to sift the matter finer than we are sure God in his jealousy will, who detested both the gold and the spoil of idolatrous cities, and forbid the eating of things offered to idols? Are we stronger than he, to brook that which his heart cannot brook ? It is not surely because we think that prayers are nowhere to be had but at Rome ! That were a foul scorn and indignity cast upon all the reformed churches, and our own : if we imagine that all the godly ministers of England are not able to new-mould a better and more pious liturgy than this

which was conceived and infanted by an idolatrous mother, how basely were that to esteem of God's Spirit, and all the holy blessings and privileges of a true church above a false!

79. Hark ye, prelates, is this your glorious mother of England, who, whenas Christ hath taught her to pray, thinks it not enough unless she add thereto the teaching of Antichrist? How can we believe ye would refuse to take the stipend of Rome, when ye shame not to live upon the alms-basket of her prayers? Will ye persuade us, that ye can curse Rome from your hearts, when none but Rome must teach ye to pray? Abraham disdained to take so much as a thread or a shoe-latchet from the king of Sodom, though no foe of his, but a wicked king; and shall we receive our prayers at the bounty of our more wicked enemies, whose gifts are no gifts, but the instruments of our bane? Alas! that the Spirit of God should blow as an uncertain wind, should so mistake his inspiring, so misbestow his gifts, promised only to the elect, that the idolatrous should find words acceptable to present God with, and abound to their neighbours, while the true professors of the gospel can find nothing of their own worth the constituting, wherewith to worship God in public! Consider if this be to magnify the church of England, and not rather to display her nakedness to all the world.

80. Like therefore as the retaining of this Romish liturgy is a provocation to God, and a dis-honour to our church, so is it by those ceremo-

nies, those purifyings and offerings at the altar, a pollution and disturbance to the gospel itself; and a kind of driving us with the foolish Galatians to another gospel. For that which the apostles taught hath freed us in religion from the ordinances of men, and commands that “ burdens be not laid” upon the redeemed of Christ; though the formalist will say, What, no decency in God’s worship? Certainly, readers, the worship of God singly in itself, the very act of prayer and thanksgiving, with those free and unimposed expressions which from a sincere heart unbidden come into the outward gesture, is the greatest decency that can be imagined. Which to dress up and garnish with a devised bravery abolished in the law, and disclaimed by the gospel, adds nothing but a deformed ugliness; and hath ever afforded a colourable pretence to bring in all those traditions and carnalities that are so killing to the power and virtue of the gospel. What was that which made the Jews, figured under the names of Aholah and Aholibah, go a whoring after all the heathen’s inventions, but that they saw a religion gorgeously attired and desirable to the eye? What was all that the false doctors of the primitive church and ever since have done, but “ to make a fair show in the flesh,” as St. Paul’s words are?

81. If we have indeed given a bill of divorce to popery and superstition, why do we not say as to a divorced wife, Those things which are yours take them all with you, and they shall sweep after you? Why were not we thus wise at our parting

from Rome? Ah! like a crafty adulteress, she forgot not all her smooth looks and enticing words at her parting; yet keep these letters, these tokens, and these few ornaments; I am not all so greedy of what is mine, let them preserve with you the memory—of what I am? No, but of what I was; once fair and lovely in your eyes. Thus did those tender-hearted reformers dotingly suffer themselves to be overcome with harlot's language. And she, like a witch, but with a contrary policy, did not take something of theirs, that she still might have power to bewitch them, but for the same intent left something of her own behind her. And that her whorish cunning should prevail to work upon us her deceitful ends, though it be sad to speak, yet such is our blindness, that we deserve. For we are deep in dotage. We cry out sacrilege and misdevotion against those who in zeal have demolished the dens and cages of her unclean wallowings. We stand for a popish liturgy as for the ark of our covenant. And so little does it appear our prayers are from the heart, that multitudes of us declare, they know not how to pray but by rote. Yet they can learnedly invent a prayer of their own to the parliament, that they may still ignorantly read the prayers of other men to God. They object, that if we must forsake all that is Rome's, we must bid adieu to our creed; and I had thought our creed had been of the apostles, for so it bears title. But if it be hers, let her take it. We can want no creed, so long as we want not the Scriptures. We magnify

those who, in reforming our church, have inconsiderately and blamefully permitted the old leaven to remain and sour our whole lump. But they were martyrs: true; and he that looks well into the book of God's providence, if he read there that God, for this their negligence and halting, brought all that following persecution upon this church, and on themselves, perhaps will be found at the last day not to have read amiss.

82. But now, readers, we have the port within sight; his last section, which is no deep one, remains only to be forded, and then the wished shore. And here first it pleases him much, that he had descried me, as he conceives, to be unread in the councils. Concerning which matter it will not be unnecessary to shape him this answer; that some years I had spent in the stories of those Greek and Roman exploits, wherein I found many things both nobly done, and worthily spoken; when, coming in the method of time to that age wherein the church had obtained a Christian emperor, I so prepared myself, as being now to read examples of wisdom and goodness among those who were foremost in the church, not elsewhere to be paralleled; but to the amazement of what I expected, I found it all quite contrary; excepting in some very few, nothing but ambition, corruption, contention, combustion; insomuch that I could not but love the historian, Socrates, who, in the proem to his fifth book professes, "he was fain to intermix affairs of state; for that it would be else an extreme annoyance to hear, in a conti-

nued discourse, the endless brabbles and counterplottings of the bishops."

83. Finding, therefore, the most of their actions in single to be weak, and yet turbulent, full of strife and yet flat of spirit; and the sum of their best councils there collected, to be most commonly in questions either trivial or vain, or else of short and easy decision, without that great bustle which they made; I concluded that if their single ambition and ignorance was such, then certainly united in a council it would be much more; and if the compendious recital of what they there did was so tedious and unprofitable, then surely to set out the whole extent of their tattle in a dozen volumes would be a loss of time irrecoverable. Besides that which I had read of St. Martin, who for his last sixteen years could never be persuaded to be at any council of the bishops. And Gregory Nazianzen betook him to the same resolution, affirming to Procopius, "that of any council or meeting of bishops he never saw good end; nor any remedy thereby of evil in the church, but rather an increase. For," saith he, "their contentions and desire of lording no tongue is able to express."

84. I have not therefore, I confess, read more of the councils, save here and there; I should be sorry to have been such a prodigal of my time: but that which is better, I can assure this confuter, I have read into them all. And if I want any thing yet, I shall reply something toward that which in the defence of Murena was answered by Cicero to

Sulpitius the lawyer. If ye provoke me (for at no hand else will I undertake such a frivolous labour) I will in three months be an expert councilist.⁽⁵²⁾ For, be not deceived, readers, by men that would overawe your ears with big names and huge tomes that contradict and repeal one another, because they can cram a margin with citations. Do but winnow their chaff from their wheat, ye shall see their great heap shrink and wax thin, past belief.

85. From hence he passes to inquire wherefore I should blame the vices of the prelates only, seeing the inferior clergy is known to be as faulty. To which let him hear in brief; that those priests whose vices have been notorious, are all prelatrical, which argues both the impiety of that opinion, and the wicked remissness of that government. We hear not of any which are called nonconformists, that have been accused of scandalous living; but are known to be pious or at least sober men: which is a great good argument that they are in the truth and prelates in the error. He would be resolved next, "What the corruptions of the universities concern the prelates?" And to that let him take this, that the Remonstrant having spoken as if learning would decay with the removal of pre-

(52) In that admirable speech, *Pro L. Murena*, sparkling with wit and eloquence, Cicero, to humble the pride of Sulpitius, who valued himself greatly on his knowledge of the civil law, jocularly threatens in *three days* to profess himself a lawyer:— “*Itaque, si mihi, homini vehementer occupato, stomachum morveritis, triduo me jurisconsultum esse profitebor.*” c. xiii. §. 28. *Oper. t. v. p. 333. edit. Parb.*

lates, I showed him that while books were extant and in print, learning could not readily be at a worse pass in the universities than it was now under their government. Then he seeks to justify the pernicious sermons of the clergy, as if they upheld sovereignty ; whenas all Christian sovereignty is by law, and to no other end but to the maintenance of the common good. But their doctrine was plainly the dissolution of law, which only sets up sovereignty, and the erecting of an arbitrary sway, according to private will, to which they would enjoin a slavish obedience without law ; which is the known definition of a tyrant, and a tyrannized people.

86. A little beneath he denies that great riches in the church are the baits of pride and ambition ; of which error to undeceive him, I shall allege a reputed divine authority, as ancient as Constantine, which his love to antiquity must not except against ; and to add the more weight, he shall learn it rather in the words of our old poet, Gower, than in mine, that he may see it is no new opinion, but a truth delivered of old by a voice from heaven, and ratified by long experience.

“ This Constantine which heal hath found,
Within Rome anon let found
Two churches which he did make
For Peter and for Paul’s sake :
Of whom he had a vision,
And yafe thereto possession
Of lordship and of world’s good ;
But how so that his will was good
Toward the pope and his franchise,
Yet hath it proved otherwise

To see the working of the deed :
For in cronick thus I read,
Anon as he hath made the yeft,
A voice was heard on high the left,
Of which all Rome was adrad,
And said, this day venim is shad
In holy Church, of temporall
That meddleth with the spiritual ;
And how it stant in that degree,
Yet may a man the sooth see.
God amend it whan he will,
I can thereto none other skill."

87. But there were beasts of prey, saith he, before wealth was bestowed on the church. What, though, because the vultures had then but small pickings, shall we therefore go and fling them a full gorge? If they, for lucre, use to creep into the church undiscernibly, the more wisdom will it be so to provide that no revenue there may exceed the golden mean; for so good pastors will be content, as having need of no more, and knowing withal the precept and example of Christ and his apostles, and also will be less tempted to ambition. The bad will have but small matter whereon to set their mischief awork; and the worst and subtlest heads will not come at all, when they shall see the crop nothing answerable to their capacious greediness; for small temptations allure but dribbling offenders; but a great purchase will call such as both are most able of themselves, and will be most enabled hereby to compass dangerous projects.

88. "But," saith he, "a widow's house will tempt as well as a bishop's palace." Acutely

spoken ! because neither we nor the prelates can abolish widows' houses, which are but an occasion taken of evil without the church, therefore we shall set up within the church a lottery of such prizes as are the direct inviting causes of avarice and ambition, both unnecessary and harmful to be proposed, and most easy, most convenient, and needful to be removed. "Yea, but they are in a wise dispenser's hand." Let them be in whose hand they will, they are most apt to blind, to puff up, and pervert, the most seeming good. And how they have been kept from vultures, whatever the dispenser's care hath been, we have learned by our miseries.

89. But this which comes next in view, I know not what good vein or humour took him when he let drop into his paper ; I that was erewhile the ignorant, the loiterer, on the sudden by his permission am now granted "to know something." And that "such a volley of expressions" he hath met withal, "as he would never desire to have them better clothed." For me, readers, although I cannot say that I am utterly untrained in those rules which best rhetoricians have given, or unacquainted with those examples which the prime authors of eloquence have written in any learned tongue ; yet true eloquence I find to be none, but the serious and hearty love of truth : and that whose mind soever is fully possessed with a fervent desire to know good things, and with the dearest charity to infuse the knowledge of them into others, when such a man would speak, his words,

(by what I can express) like so many nimble and airy servitors, trip about him at command, and in well-ordered files, as he would wish, fall aptly into their own places.

90. But now to the remainder of our discourse. Christ refused great riches and large honours at the devil's hand. But why ? saith he, "as they were tendered by him from whom it was a sin to receive them." Timely remembered : why is it not therefore as much a sin to receive a liturgy of the masses' giving, were it for nothing else but for the giver? "But he could make no use of such a high estate," quoth the confuter, opportunely. For why then should the servant take upon him to use those things which his master had unfitted himself to use, that he might teach his ministers to follow his steps in the same ministry? But "they were offered him to a bad end." So they prove to the prelates, who, after their preferment, most usually change the teaching labour of the word, into the unteaching ease of lordship over consciences and purses. But he proceeds : "God enticed the Israelites with the promise of Canaan ;" did not the prelates bring as slavish minds with them, as the Jews brought out of Egypt, they had left out that instance. Besides that it was then the time, whenas the best of them, as St. Paul saith, "was shut up unto the faith under the law, their schoolmaster," who was forced to entice them as children with childish enticements. But the gospel is our manhood, and the ministry should be the manhood of the gospel, not to look

after, much less so basely to plead for earthly rewards.

91. “But God incited the wisest man, Solomon, with these means.” Ah, confuter of thyself, this example hath undone thee; Solomon asked an understanding heart, which the prelates have little care to ask. He asked no riches, which is their chief care; therefore was the prayer of Solomon pleasing to God: he gave him wisdom at his request, and riches without asking, as now he gives the prelates riches at their seeking, and no wisdom because of their perverse asking. But he gives not over yet, “Moses had an eye to the reward.” To what reward, thou man that lookest with Balaam’s eyes? To what reward had the faith of Moses an eye? He that had forsaken all the greatness of Egypt, and chose a troublesome journey in his old age through the wilderness, and yet arrived not at his journey’s end. His faithful eyes were fixed upon that incorruptible reward, promised to Abraham and his seed in the Messiah; he sought a heavenly reward, which could make him happy, and never hurt him; and to such a reward every good man may have a respect; but the prelates are eager of such rewards as cannot make them happy, but can only make them worse. Jacob, a prince born, vowed that if God would “but give him bread to eat, and raiment to put on, then the Lord should be his God.” But the prelates of mean birth, and oftentimes of lowest, making show as if they were called to the spiritual and humble ministry of the gospel, yet

murmur, and think it a hard service, unless, contrary to the tenor of their profession, they may eat the bread and wear the honours of princes: so much more covetous and base they are than Simon Magus, for he proffered a reward to be admitted to that work, which they will not be meanly hired to.

92. But, saith he, “Are not the clergy members of Christ; why should not each member thrive alike?” Carnal textman! as if worldly thriving were one of the privileges we have by being in Christ, and were not a providence oftentimes extended more liberally to the Infidel than to the Christian. Therefore must the ministers of Christ not be over rich or great in the world, because their calling is spiritual, not secular; because they have a special warfare, which is not to be entangled with many impediments; because their master, Christ, gave them this precept, and set them this example, told them this was the mystery of his coming, by mean things and persons to subdue mighty ones; and lastly, because a middle estate is most proper to the office of teaching, whereas higher dignity teaches far less, and blinds the teacher. Nay, saith the confuter, fetching his last endeavour, “the prelates will be very loath to let go their baronies, and votes in parliament,” and calls it “God’s cause,” with an insufferable impudence. “Not that they love the honours and the means,” good men and generous! “but that they would not have their country made guilty of such a sacrilege and injustice!”

93. A worthy patriot for his own corrupt ends. That which he imputes as sacrilege to his country, is the only way left them to purge that abominable sacrilege out of the land, which none but the prelates are guilty of ; who for the discharge of one single duty, receive and keep that which might be enough to satisfy the labours of many painful ministers better deserving than themselves ; who possess huge benefices (⁵³) for lazy performances, great promotions only for the execution of a cruel disgospelling jurisdiction ; who engross many pluralities under a non-resident and slubbering dispatch of souls ; who let hundreds of parishes famish in one diocess, while they, the prelates, are mute, and yet enjoy that wealth that would furnish all those dark places with able supply : and yet they eat, and yet they live at the rate of earls, and yet hoard up ; they who chase away all the faithful shepherds of the flock, and bring in a dearth of spiritual food, robbing thereby the church of her dearest treasure, and sending herds of souls starveling to hell, while they feast and riot upon the labours of hireling curates, consuming and purloining even that which by their foundation is allowed, and left to the poor, and to reparations

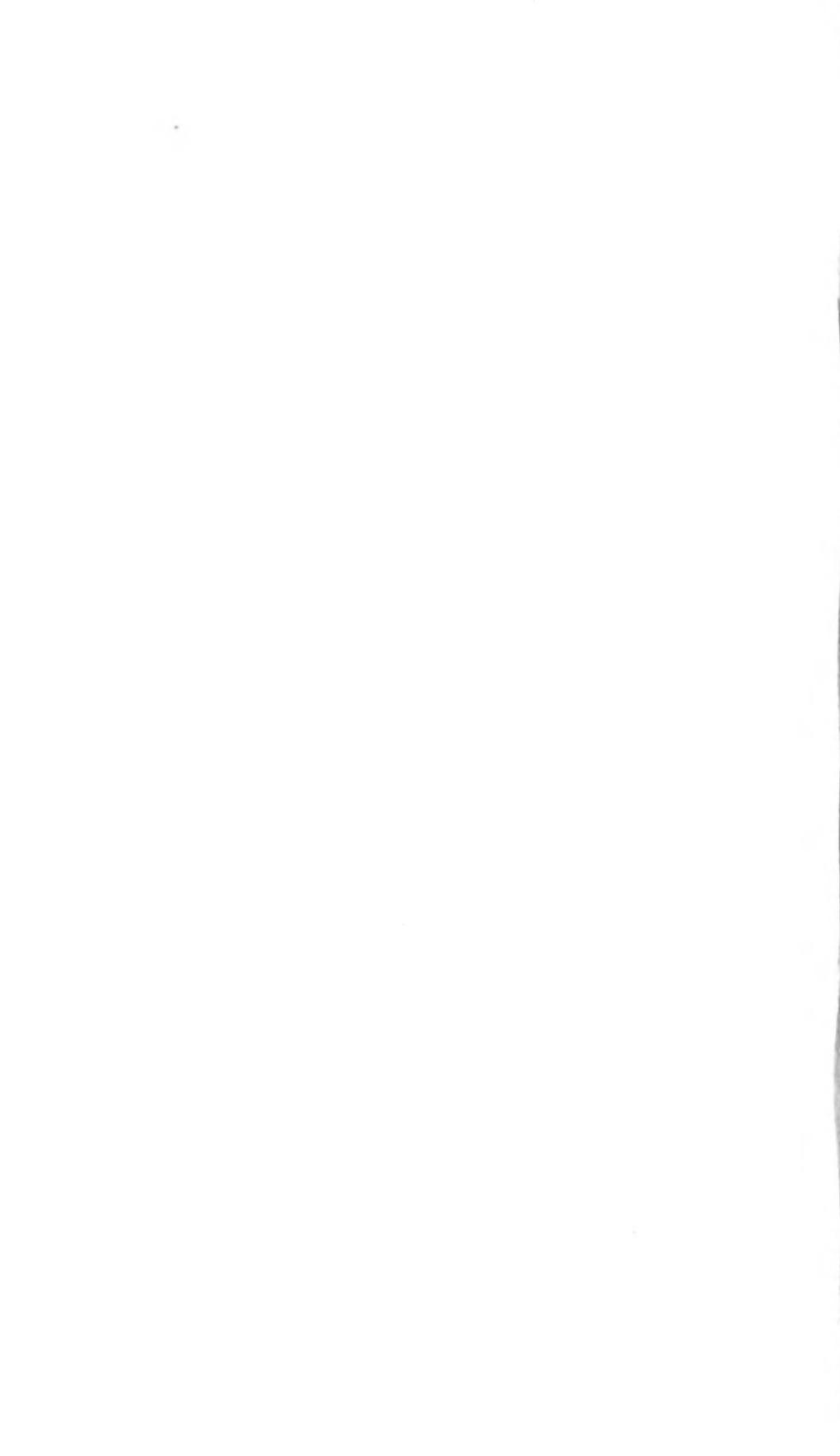
(⁵³) The love of pluralities descended as an inheritance from the Roman Catholic to the Protestant church. Even in this matter, however, some reformation has been effected ; for no clergyman, we believe, can now be reproached with equalling, in ambition and the love of lucre, Mansel, chaplain to Henry III., who is said to have held seven hundred ecclesiastical livings at once.—*Hume, Hist. of England*, chap. xii.

of the church. These are they who have bound the land with the sin of sacrilege, from which mortal engagement we shall never be free, till we have totally removed, with one labour, as one individual thing, prelacy and sacrilege. And herein will the king be a true defender of the faith, not by paring or lessening, but by distributing in due proportion the maintenance of the church, that all parts of the land may equally partake the plentiful and diligent preaching of the faith ; the scandal of ceremonies thrown out that delude and circumvent the faith ; and the usurpation of prelates laid level, who are in words the fathers, but in their deeds, the oppugners of the faith. This is that which will best confirm him in that glorious title.

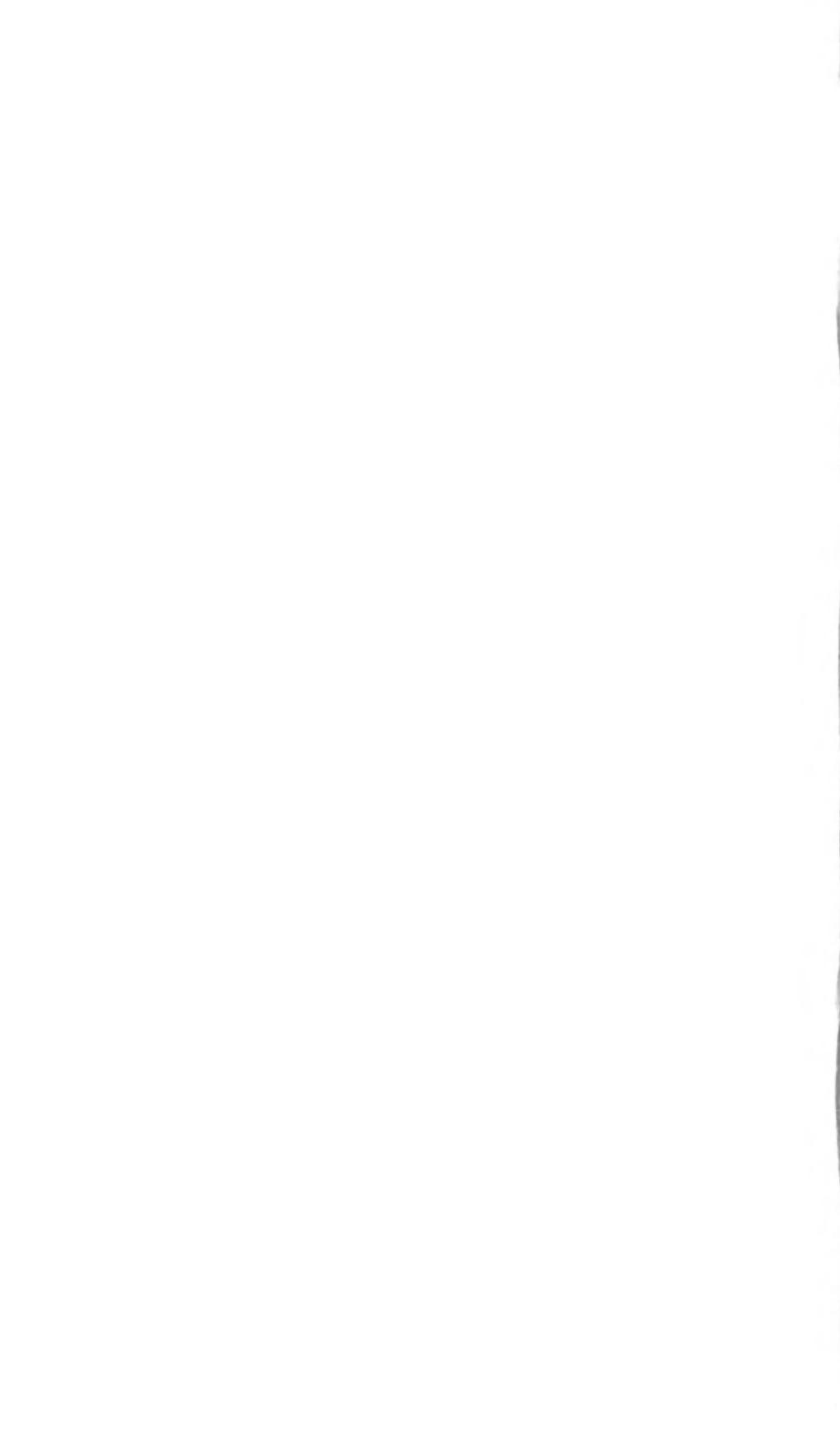
94. Thus ye have heard, readers, how many shifts and wiles the prelates have invented to save their ill-got booty. And if it be true, as in Scripture it is foretold, that pride and covetousness are the sure marks of those false prophets which are to come ; then boldly conclude these to be as great seducers as any of the latter times. For between this and the judgment-day do not look for any arch deceivers, who in spite of reformation will use more craft, or less shame to defend their love of the world and their ambition, than these prelates have done. And if ye think that soundness of reason, or what force of argument soever, will bring them to an ingenuous silence, ye think that which will never be. But if ye take that course which Erasmus was wont to say Luther took

against the pope and monks ; if ye denounce war against their mitres and their bellies, ye shall soon discern that turban of pride, which they wear upon their heads, to be no helmet of salvation, but the mere metal and hornwork of papal jurisdiction ; and that they have also this gift, like a certain kind of some that are possessed, to have their voice in their bellies, which being well-drained and taken down, their great oracle, which is only there, will soon be dumb ; and the divine right of episcopacy, forthwith expiring, will put us no more to trouble with tedious antiquities and disputes.

TRACTATE
ON
EDUCATION.



HAVING completed his different works on Divorce, which led him deeply to investigate the subject of marriage, love, and whatever relates to the happiness of domestic life, Milton, in 1644, produced his brief treatise on Education. In addition to those high intellectual endowments, which raised him above all the men of his age, he had here the advantage of experience, having been himself engaged in the instruction of youth. His opinions, therefore, are entitled to the greatest respect; for he had put in practice what he recommends. Johnson, and many others, who have treated his vast plan as visionary, scarcely comprehended its drift, which was not to impart scanty learning to vulgar or needy students, whom their necessities call away into the world before their minds are half furnished; but to create, from among the youth of ampler leisure and fortune, able and accomplished senators, judges, and generals. How much may be effected when the teacher's skill and knowledge are seconded by the industry and emulative ardour of ingenuous pupils, they are best able to judge who, having children of their own, have themselves undertaken the sacred duty of spreading before them the vast map of science. Most commonly they have to check or moderate the passion for labour, which, by exciting the mind to a preternatural activity, might undermine the health, or wholly destroy the body. Milton himself, while a boy, fell into this error. During several years he sat up reading until midnight; which, as he relates in his works, debilitated the organs of sight, and thus laid the foundation of that calamity which constituted the chief source of bitterness in his old age.



ON EDUCATION.

TO MASTER SAMUEL HARTLIB.

1. I AM long since persuaded, Master Hartlib,(¹) that to say or do aught worth memory and imitation, no purpose or respect should sooner move us than simply the love of God, and of mankind. Nevertheless to write now the reforming of education, though it be one of the greatest and noblest designs that can be thought on, and for the want whereof this nation perishes ; I had not yet at this time been induced, but by your earnest entreaties and serious conjurements ; as having my mind for the present half diverted in the pursuance of some other assertions, the knowledge and the use of which cannot but be a great furtherance both to the enlargement of truth, and honest living with much more peace. Nor should the laws of

(¹) Of Hartlib little more is known than that he was a friend of Milton, who had studied with peculiar diligence the science of education, and to whom Sir William Petty subsequently dedicated one of his earliest works. From several expressions in this and the following paragraphs, he would appear to have been a foreigner ; for he is spoken of as one sent hither from a far country, and allusion is made to his labours beyond the seas.

any private friendship have prevailed with me to divide thus, or transpose my former thoughts, but that I see those aims, those actions, which have won you with me the esteem of a person sent hither by some good providence from a far country to be the occasion and incitement of great good to this island.

2. And, as I hear, you have obtained the same repute with men of most approved wisdom, and some of the highest authority among us; not to mention the learned correspondence which you hold in foreign parts, and the extraordinary pains and diligence which you have used in this matter, both here and beyond the seas; either by the definite will of God so ruling, or the peculiar sway of nature, which also is God's working. Neither can I think that so reputed and so valued as you are, you would, to the forfeit of your own discerning ability, impose upon me an unfit and over-ponderous argument; but that the satisfaction which you profess to have received, from those incidental discourses which we have wandered into, hath pressed and almost constrained you into a persuasion, that what you require from me in this point, I neither ought nor can in conscience defer beyond this time both of so much need at once, and so much opportunity to try what God hath determined.

3. I will not resist therefore whatever it is, either of divine or human obligement, that you lay upon me; but will forthwith set down in writing, as you request me, that voluntary idea,

which hath long, in silence, presented itself to me, of a better education, in extent and comprehension far more large, and yet of time far shorter, and of attainment far more certain, than hath been yet in practice. Brief I shall endeavour to be ; (²) for that which I have to say, assuredly this nation hath extreme need should be done sooner than spoken. To tell you therefore what I have benefited herein among old renowned authors, I shall spare ; and to search what many modern Januas and Didactics, more than ever I shall read, have projected, my inclination leads me not. But if you can accept of these few observations which have flowered off, and are as it were the burnish-

(²) It is this brevity, however, that has probably laid open his system to so many objections. Dr. Symmons, usually the apologist of Milton, deserts him here ; remarking that, although his plan of education was magnificent, it appeared “to be calculated only to amuse the fancy, while it would be found by experience to disappoint the expectation.”—*Life, &c.* p. 257. Sir Egerton Bridges, as was to be expected, passes over the tractate without a single observation ; but Mr. Mitford, with that modesty and good sense for which his memoir is generally distinguished, questions the justice of Dr. Symmons’s decision, without, however, expressly referring to it. “The system of education which he adopted was deep and comprehensive ; it promised to teach science with language, or rather to make the study of languages subservient to the acquisition of scientific knowledge. Dr. Johnson has severely censured this method of instruction, but with arguments that might not unsuccessfully be met. The plan recommended by the authority of Milton seems to be chiefly liable to objection from being too extensive.”—*Life, &c.* p. 28. The remark immediately following is perhaps erroneous ; but he has doubtless entered properly into the views of Milton, and ably defends that portion of his plan which refers more particularly to the teaching of science.

ing of many studious and contemplative years, altogether spent in the search of religious and civil knowledge, and such as pleased you so well in the relating, I here give you them to dispose of.

4. The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection. But because our understanding cannot in this body found itself but on sensible things, nor arrive so clearly to the knowledge of God and things invisible, as by orderly conning over the visible and inferior creature, the same method is necessarily to be followed in all discreet teaching. And seeing every nation affords not experience and tradition enough for all kinds of learning, therefore we are chiefly taught the languages of those people who have at any time been most industrious after wisdom; so that language is but the instrument conveying to us things useful to be known. And though a linguist should pride himself to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the world into, ⁽³⁾ yet if he have not studied the solid things in them, as well as the words and lexicons, he were nothing so much to be esteemed a learned man, as any yeoman or

(3) Though he himself understood many languages, and appears to have possessed a peculiar aptitude for this kind of learning, no one could be further than he from pedantry. In his view, language was merely the instrument of knowledge.

tradesman competently wise in his mother dialect only.

5. Hence appear the many mistakes which have made learning generally so unpleasing and so unsuccessful; first, we do amiss to spend seven or eight years merely in scraping together so much miserable Latin and Greek, as might be learned otherwise easily and delightfully in one year.⁽⁴⁾ And that which casts our proficiency therein so much behind, is our time lost partly in too oft idle vacancies given both to schools and universities; partly in a preposterous exaction, forcing the empty wits of children to compose themes, verses, and orations, which are the acts of ripest judgment, and the final work of a head filled by long reading and observing, with elegant maxims and copious invention. These are not matters to be wrung from poor striplings, like blood out of the nose, or the plucking of untimely fruit. Besides the ill habit which they get of wretched barbarizing against the Latin and Greek idiom, with their untutored Anglicisms, odious to be read, yet not to be avoided without a well-continued and judicious conversing among pure authors digested, which they scarce taste.⁽⁵⁾ Whereas, if after some

(4) On this subject, see Locke's *Treatise on Education*, §. 162—177.—*Works, folio edition*, vol. iii. p. 72. *sqq.*

(5) Philips, a pupil of Milton, furnishes us with a list of the books which he himself made use of in teaching: these were, in Latin, the agricultural works of Cato, Columella, Varro, and Palladius, Celsus on Medicine, Pliny's Natural History, Vitruvius's Architecture, Frontinus's Stratagems, and the Philosophical Poems of Lucretius and Manilius: in Greek, Hesiod, Aratus,

preparatory grounds of speech by their certain forms got into memory, they were led to the praxis thereof in some chosen short book lessoned thoroughly to them, they might then forthwith proceed to learn the substance of good things, and arts in due order, which would bring the whole language quickly into their power. This I take to be the most rational and most profitable way of learning languages, and whereby we may best hope to give account to God of our youth spent herein.

6. And for the usual method of teaching arts, I deem it to be an old error of universities, not yet well recovered from the scholastic grossness of barbarous ages, that instead of beginning with arts most easy, (and those be such as are most obvious to the sense,) they present their young unmatriculated novices, at first coming, with the most intellective abstractions of logic and metaphysics; so that they having but newly left those grammatic flats and shallows, where they stuck unreasonably to learn a few words with lamentable construction, and now on the sudden transported under another climate, to be tossed and turmoiled with their unballasted wits in fathomless and unquiet deeps of controversy, do for the most part grow into hatred and contempt of learning, mocked and deluded all this while with ragged

Dionysius Periegesis, Oppian's Cynegetica and Halieutics, Apollonius Rhodius, Quintus Calaber, certain of Plutarch's Philosophical works, Geminus's Astronomy, Xenophon's Cyropaedia and Anabasis, Polyænus's Stratagems, and Ælian's Tactics.

notions and babblements, while they expected worthy and delightful knowledge ; till poverty or youthful years call them importunately their several ways, and hasten them, with the sway of friends, either to an ambitious and mercenary, or ignorantly zealous divinity ; some allured to the trade of law, grounding their purposes not on the prudent and heavenly contemplation of justice and equity, which was never taught them, but on the promising and pleasing thoughts of litigious terms, fat contentions, and flowing fees ; others betake them to state affairs, with souls so unprincipled in virtue and true generous breeding, that flattery and court-shifts and tyrannous aphorisms (⁶) appear to them the highest points of wisdom ; instilling their barren hearts with a conscientious slavery ; if, as I rather think, it be not feigned. Others, lastly, of a more delicious and airy spirit, retire themselves (knowing no better) to the enjoyments of ease and luxury, living out their days in feast and jollity ; which indeed is the wisest and safest course of all these, unless they were with more integrity undertaken. And these are the errors, and these are the fruits of misspending our prime youth at the schools and universities as we do, either in learning mere words or such things chiefly as were better unlearned.

(⁶) His hatred and contempt of tyranny everywhere break forth. Bacon, himself a lawyer, likewise notices the too common effect of a laborious study of the law, which appears to have a natural tendency to narrow and enfeeble the mind. Our history, however, furnishes some brilliant exceptions.

7. I shall detain you now no longer in the demonstration of what we should not do, but straight conduct you to a hill-side, where I will point you out the right path of a virtuous and noble education ; laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospect, and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming.⁽⁷⁾ I doubt not but ye shall have more ado to drive our dullest and laziest youth, our stocks and stubs, from the infinite desire of such a happy nurture, than we have now to hale and drag our choicest and hopefulllest wits to that asinine feast of sowthistles and brambles, which is commonly set before them as all the food and entertainment of their tenderest and most docile age. I call therefore a complete and generous education, that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war. And how all this may be done between twelve and one and twenty, less time than is now bestowed in pure trifling at grammar and sophistry, is to be thus ordered.

8. First, to find out a spacious house and ground about it fit for an academy, and big enough to lodge a hundred and fifty persons, ⁽⁸⁾ whereof

(7) He had already, in Comus, described the delight derivable from the study of philosophy :

“ How charming is divine philosophy !
Not harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo’s lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets
Where no crude surfeit reigns.”

(8) Nowhere has the material frame-work of Milton’s system

twenty or thereabout may be attendants, all under the government of one, who shall be thought of desert sufficient, and ability either to do all, or wisely to direct and oversee it done. This place should be at once both school and university, not needing a remove to any other house of scholarship, except it be some peculiar college of law, or physic, where they mean to be practitioners; but as for those general studies which take up all our time from Lilly to commencing, as they term it, master of art, it should be absolute. After this pattern, as many edifices may be converted to this use as shall be needful in every city throughout this land, which would tend much to the increase of learning and civility every where. This number, less or more thus collected, to the convenience of a foot company, or interchangeably two troops of cavalry, should divide their day's work into three parts as it lies orderly; their studies, their exercise, and their diet.

9. For their studies; first, they should begin with the chief and necessary rules of some good grammar, either that now used, or any better; and while this is doing, their speech is to be fashioned to a distinct and clear pronunciation, as near as may be to the Italian, especially in the vowels.

of education been more nearly approached than in the public schools of Egypt. The College of Kasserlyne, on the banks of the Nile, is such "a spacious house," with beautiful and ample grounds about it; but in the interior arrangements, the studies, and the results, we must not look for any thing resembling what the poet proposed in this democratic establishment.--See *Egypt and Mohammed Ali*, vol. ii. p. 395. *sqq.*

For we Englishmen being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a southern tongue ; but are observed by all other nations to speak exceeding close and inward ; so that to smatter Latin with an English mouth, is as ill a hearing as law French. Next, to make them expert in the usefulllest points of grammar ; and withal to season them and win them early to the love of virtue and true labour, ere any flattering seducement or vain principle seize them wandering, some easy and delightful book of education would be read to them ; whereof the Greeks have store, as Cebes, Plutarch, and other Socratic discourses. But in Latin we have none of classic authority extant, except the two or three first books of Quintilian, and some select pieces elsewhere.

13. But here the main skill and groundwork will be, to temper them such lectures and explanations, upon every opportunity, as may lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning, and the admiration of virtue ; stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men, and worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages. That they may despise and scorn all their childeish and ill-taught qualities, to delight in manly and liberal exercises ; which he who hath the art and proper eloquence to catch them with, what with mild and effectual persuasions, and what with the intimation of some fear, if need be, but chiefly by his own example, might in a short space gain them to an incredible diligence and courage ; infusing into their young breasts such an

ingenuous and noble ardour, as would not fail to make many of them renowned and matchless men. (⁹) At the same time, some other hour of the day, might be taught them the rules of arithmetic, and soon after the elements of geometry, even playing, as the old manner was. After evening repast, till bedtime, their thoughts would be best taken up in the easy grounds of religion, and the story of Scripture.

The next step would be to the authors of agriculture, Cato, Varro, and Columella, for the matter is most easy ; and if the language be difficult, so much the better, it is not a difficulty above their years. And here will be an occasion of inciting, and enabling them hereafter to improve the tillage of their country, to recover the bad soil, and to remedy the waste that is made of good ; (¹⁰) for this was one of Hercules' praises. Ere half these authors be read (which will soon be with plying hard and daily) they cannot choose but be

(⁹) He here alludes to the Socratic system of education, frequently glanced at in all the dialogues of Plato, but more fully developed in the *Protagoras*. In pursuing a plan of this kind, the teacher would profit no less than the pupils—perhaps more. Adam Smith observes that almost all the great writers of Greece had been engaged in the business of education.

(¹⁰) Dr. Symmons remarks, that in agriculture no benefit could now be derived from the study of ancient authors. But Milton never intended that his pupils should seek to improve themselves in husbandry by reading Varro or Cato. His design extended no further than to render their boyish studies a means of awakening in their minds a love of rural pursuits, which age and experience might afterwards enable them to turn to good account.

masters of any ordinary prose. So that it will be then seasonable for them to learn in any modern author the use of the globes, and all the maps, first, with the old names, and then with the new ;⁽¹¹⁾ or they might be then capable to read any compendious method of natural philosophy.

12. And at the same time might be entering into the Greek tongue, after the same manner as was before prescribed in the Latin ; whereby the difficulties of grammar being soon overcome, all the historical physiology⁽¹²⁾ of Aristotle and Theophrastus are open before them, and, as I may say, under contribution. The like access will be

(¹¹) This mode of studying geography has since been adopted, particularly at Eton, where, with the help of Arrowsmith's "Comparative Atlas," in which the ancient and modern maps of countries are bound up face to face, a lad may quickly acquire a knowledge at least of the elements of this useful science.

(¹²) Milton here enters upon that part of his plan which more particularly provoked Dr. Johnson's animadversions. He thought it, in fact, a good opportunity to display his wisdom, which he considered superior to Milton's, and, by supporting his views with the seeming approbation of Socrates, to obtain the credit of being what, in the cant of the present day, is called "a practical man." In order to insinuate into the reader's mind that Milton made little or no account of moral philosophy, he draws a sort of parallel between "the knowledge of external nature," and the science of ethics, and gives, as every wise man must, the preference to the latter. He then proceeds : " Those authors, therefore, are to be read at schools that supply most axioms of prudence, most principles of moral truth, and most materials for conversation ; and these purposes are best served by poets, orators, and historians. Let me not be censured for this digression as pedantic or paradoxical ; for, *if I have Milton against me,*" (observe that,) " I have Socrates on my side. It was his labour to turn philosophy from the study of nature to speculations upon life ; but the in-

to Vitruvius, to Seneca's natural questions, to Mela, Celsus, Pliny, or Solinus. And having thus passed the principles of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and geography, with a general compact of physics, they may descend in mathematics to the instrumental science of trigonometry, and from thence to fortification, architecture, enginery, or navigation. And in natural philosophy they may proceed leisurely from the history of meteors, minerals, plants, and living creatures, as far as anatomy.

13. Then also in course might be read to them, out of some not tedious writer, the institution of

novators whom I oppose," (he represents Socrates as *an innovator* in his day,) " are turning off attention from life to nature. They seem to think that we are placed here to watch the growth of plants, or the motions of the stars: Socrates was rather of opinion, that what we had to learn was, how to do good, and avoid evil." Before we inquire whether Socrates would know his own features in Johnson's picture, it is necessary to remark that the biographer was altogether mistaken in imagining he had against him Milton; who, both in this treatise, and in his life, made it abundantly manifest that he considered the study of the sciences, nay, of poetry itself, of very inferior importance compared with that philosophy which embraces the knowledge of virtue, public and private, and leads to an active defence of the rights and dignity of human nature. He was very far, however, from supposing that watching "the growth of plants," or "the motions of the stars," necessarily constitutes any impediment in the way to an acquaintance with the principles of ethics; and, accordingly, enumerates the knowledge of nature among the things which might very advantageously engage the attention of youth, before coming to the master-sciences of morals and politics. But "then will be required," says he, "a special reinforcement of constant and sound indoctrinating, to set them right and firm, instructing them more amply in the knowledge of

phyic, (¹³) that they may know the tempers, the humours, the seasons, and how to manage a crudity; which he who can wisely and timely do, is not only a great physician to himself and to his friends, but also may, at some time or other, save an army by this frugal and expenseless means only; and not let the healthy and stout bodies of young men rot away under him for want of this discipline; which is a great pity, and no less a shame to the commander. (¹⁴) To set forward all these

virtue and the hatred of vice," &c. vide below, §. 14. Now let us see whether Socrates be for Milton or Johnson. In the *Phædrus*, where he exalts the wisdom and eloquence of Pericles above those of his contemporaries, he is led to explain to his enthusiastic companion by what arts and pursuits the great statesman had acquired his power, and the consummate skill with which he wielded it; and amongst those means, next after the vast genius which nature had bestowed on him, Socrates reckons the knowledge of physics acquired under Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ. "For, from these studies," says he, "proceed loftiness of mind, and the power to accomplish whatever may be undertaken: τὸ γὰρ ἵψηλόνον τοῦτο καὶ παντὶ τελεσιουργὸν ἔσται εἰπεῖν ποθεν εἰσιεραι.—*Platon. Oper. i. 87. edit. Bekk.* He undoubtedly considered civil wisdom superior to scientific knowledge, and so did Milton.

(¹³) Like Locke, Milton is said to have been fond of the study of medicine, and, by unskillfully tampering with it, to have injured his sight. But this report appears to rest on no good foundation.

(¹⁴) That quaint and enthusiastic soldier, Le Cointe, in his "Commentaire sur la Retraite des Dix Mille," enumerating the studies of a military man, does not set down a knowledge of medicine, unless, indeed, it be included in the word "physique," which strictly signifies "natural philosophy." In the early ages of the world, before science had branched off into numerous divisions, a good general was both a physician and a soldier;

proceedings in nature and mathematics, what hinders but that they may procure, as oft as shall be needful, the helpful experience of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries; (¹⁵) and in the other sciences, architects, engineers, mariners, anatomists; who doubtless would be ready, some for reward, and some to favour such a hopeful seminary. And this will give them such a real tincture of natural knowledge, as they shall never forget, but daily augment with delight. Then also those poets (¹⁶) which are now counted most hard, will be both facile and pleasant, Orpheus, Hesiod, Theocritus, Aratus, Nicander, Oppian, Dionysius; and in Latin, Lucretius, Manilius, and the rural part of Virgil.

14. By this time, years and good general precepts, will have furnished them more distinctly with that act of reason which in ethics is called Proairesis; that they may with some judgment contemplate upon moral good and evil. Then will be required a special reinforcement of constant and sound indoctrinating, to set them right and firm, instructing them more amply in the knowledge of virtue and the hatred of vice; while their

and, to say the least, the knowledge of physic might not be wholly useless to the commander of an army even in our own days.

(¹⁵) Baron Fellenberg has, to a certain extent, realized Milton's system at Hoffwyll.

(¹⁶) These poets, though they seem to make up a formidable list of authors, might in reality, by any one familiar with the Greek and Latin languages, be read in a very short time. None of them are voluminous; and several, the language once mastered, might be read in a day.

young and pliant affections are led through all the moral works of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Plutarch, Laertius, and those Locrian remnants; (¹⁷) but still to be reduced in their nightward studies wherewith they close the day's work, under the determinate sentence of David or Solomon, or the evangelists and apostolic Scriptures. Being perfect in the knowledge of personal duty, they may then begin the study of economics. (¹⁸) And either now or before this, they may have easily learned, at any odd hour, the Italian tongue. And soon after, but with wariness and good antidote, it would be wholesome enough to let them taste some choice comedies, Greek, Latin, or Italian; those tragedies also, that treat of household matters, as *Trachiniæ*, *Alcestis*, and the like.

15. The next removal must be to the study of polities; to know the beginning, end, and reasons

(¹⁷) Timaeus of Locris, who flourished about 390 B. C. was one of the masters of Plato. There remains, under his name, a treatise written in the Doric dialect, *Περὶ ψυχᾶς καὶ φύσιος*: that is, "On the Soul of the World, and Nature." Its authenticity has been much disputed. In 1762, the Marquis d'Argens published at Berlin the Greek text, accompanied by a French translation, with philosophical dissertations.

(¹⁸) The works here alluded to are, 1. the *'Οἰκονομικὸς λόγος*, of Xenophon, a Socratic dialogue, containing instructive details on Greek agriculture, and several anecdotes of the younger Cyrus. Cicero translated the work into Latin. 2. The *Oikonomikà*, attributed to Aristotle, but falsely, according to Schneider, who published a new edition of it, in 1815, at Leipsic. And, 3. The *Γεωπονικὴ* of Cassianus Bassus, which, amidst much that is worthless, contains many curious and interesting particulars.

of political societies ; (¹⁹) that they may not, in a dangerous fit of the commonwealth, be such poor, shaken, uncertain reeds, of such a tottering conscience, as many of our great counsellors have lately shown themselves, but steadfast pillars of the state. After this, they are to dive into the grounds of law, and legal justice ; delivered first and with best warrant by Moses ; and as far as human prudence can be trusted, in those extolled remains of Grecian lawgivers, Lycurgus, Solon, Zaleucus, Charondas, and thence to all the Roman edicts and tables with their Justinian : and so down to the Saxon and common laws of England, and the statutes.

16. Sundays also and every evening may be now understandingly spent in the highest matters of theology, and church history, ancient and modern ; and ere this time the Hebrew tongue at a set hour might have been gained, that the Scriptures may be now read in their own original ; whereto it would be no impossibility to add the Chaldee and the Syrian dialect. (²⁰) When all these employments are well conquered, then will the choice histories, heroic poems, and Attic tragedies of stateliest and most regal argument, with all the famous political orations, offer themselves ; which if they were not only read, but some of them got by me-

(¹⁹) Politics were studied as a science in Milton's age ; and the taste appears to be reviving in England.

(²⁰) He here recommends nothing but what he himself understood.

mory, (²¹) and solemnly pronounced with right accent and grace, as might be taught, would endue them even with the spirit and vigour of Demosthenes or Cicero, Euripides or Sophocles.

17. And now, lastly, will be the time to read with them those organic arts, which enable men to discourse and write perspicuously, elegantly, and according to the fittest style, of lofty, mean, or lowly. Logic, (²²) therefore, so much as is useful, is to be referred to this due place with all her well-couched heads and topics, until it be time to open her contracted palm into a graceful and ornate rhetoric, taught out of the rule of Plato, Aristotle, Phalereus, Cicero, Hermogenes, Longinus. (²³) To which poetry would be made subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being less subtle and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate. I mean not here the prosody of a verse, which they

(²¹) From the *Phædrus* we learn it was the practice among the young men of Athens to commit entire speeches to memory. Xenophon, in the *Memorabilia*, introduces a youth who could repeat the whole *Iliad*; Cicero, *De Oratore*, speaks with commendation of this kind of mental exercise; and it may be observed, generally, that the science of mnemonics was cultivated much more carefully among the ancients than it has ever been in modern times.

(²²) In 1672, Milton himself published a work on Logic, entitled “*Artis Logicæ Plenior Institutio, ad Petri Rami Methodum Concinnata, Adjecta est Praxis Analytica, et Patri Rami Vita. Libris Duobus.*”

(²³) To these should undoubtedly be added Quintilian and Vossius, the latter of whom has, by his compendious Rhetoric, done good service to the cause of eloquence. Of this work the second and best edition was published at Leyden, 1637.

could not but have hit on before among the rudiments of grammar; but that sublime art which in Aristotle's poetics, in Horace, and the Italian commentaries of Castelvetro, (²⁴) Tasso, Mazzoni, and others, teaches what the laws are of a true epic poem, what of a dramatic, what of a lyric, what decorum is, which is the grand masterpiece to observe. This would make them soon perceive what despicable creatures our common rhymers and play-writers be; and show them what religious, what glorious and magnificent use might be made of poetry, both in divine and human things.

18. From hence, and not till now, will be the right season of forming them to be able writers and composers in every excellent matter, when they shall be thus fraught with an universal insight into things. (²⁵) Or whether they be to speak in parliament or council, honour and attention would be waiting on their lips. There would then also appear in pulpits other visages, other gestures, and stuff otherwise wrought than what we now sit under, oftentimes to as great a trial of our patience as any other that they preach to us. These are the studies wherein our noble and our gentle youth

(²⁴) Piccolomini and Beni deserve also to be enumerated among the excellent commentators of the Poetics.

(²⁵) The reader will here doubtless call to mind the splendid idea given by Crassus (*De Oratore*, l. i.) of the education and accomplishments of an orator. Both Cicero and Milton looked solely to the development of great minds; and from the system of the latter, as from the school of Isocrates, which Cicero compares to the Trojan horse, none but princes in eloquence, had it ever been fully put in practice, would have issued.

ought to bestow their time, in a disciplinary way, from twelve to one and twenty: unless they rely more upon their ancestors dead, than upon themselves living. In which methodical course it is so supposed they must proceed by the steady pace of learning onward, as at convenient times, for memory's sake, to retire back into the middle ward, and sometimes into the rear of what they have been taught, until they have confirmed and solidly united the whole body of their perfected knowledge, like the last embattling of a Roman legion. Now will be worth the seeing, what exercises and recreations may best agree, and become these studies.

19. The course of study hitherto briefly described is, what I can guess by reading, likest to those ancient and famous schools of Pythagoras, Plato, Isocrates, Aristotle, and such others, out of which were bred such a number of renowned philosophers, orators, historians, poets, and princes all over Greece, Italy, and Asia, besides the flourishing studies of Cyrene and Alexandria. But herein it shall exceed them, and supply a defect as great as that which Plato noted in the commonwealth of Sparta; (²⁶) whereas that city trained up their youth most for war, and these in their academies and Lycaeum all for the gown, this institution of

(²⁶) See Plato, *De Legibus*, l. i. *Opera*, t. vii. p. 181, sqq. edit. Bekk. Aristotle notices the same defect in the Spartan government; and adds that, though military superiority was the object aimed at by Lycurgus, they had been excelled by their neighbours (the Athenians?) no less in the virtues of war

breeding which I here delineate shall be equally good both for peace and war. Therefore about an hour and a half ere they eat at noon should be allowed them for exercise, and due rest afterwards; but the time for this may be enlarged at pleasure, according as their rising in the morning shall be early.

20. The exercise which I commend first, is the exact use of their weapon, to guard, and to strike safely with edge or point; this will keep them healthy, nimble, strong, and well in breath; is also the likeliest means to make them grow large and tall, and to inspire them with a gallant and fearless courage, which being tempered with seasonable lectures and precepts to them of true fortitude and patience, will turn into a native and heroic valour, and make them hate the cowardice of doing wrong. They must be also practised in all the locks and gripes of wrestling, wherein Englishmen were wont to excel, (²⁷) as need may often be in fight to tug, to grapple, and to close. And

than in the arts of peace.—*Politics*, 1. ii. and 1. v. c. 4. Müller, in his “Hist. and Antiq. of the Doric Race,” endeavours to exalt the political institutions of the Spartans above the popular governments of the Ionians.—Vol. ii. p. 1—269.

(²⁷) Aristotle’s remarks on the employment of exercise in education are full of good sense. He allows, as might have been expected, that the culture of the body should precede that of the mind; but is far from inculcating, with many writers, the necessity of acquiring athletic habits of body, which have, on the growth and shape, effects no less injurious than on the intellect. At Sparta, where gymnastic exercises were not pursued as a profession, excessive labour produced no less dangerous results—unfeeling and ferocious habits. During the years preceding

this perhaps will be enough, wherein to prove and heat their single strength.

21. The interim of unsweating themselves regularly, and convenient rest before meat, may, both with profit and delight, be taken up in recreating and composing their travailed spirits with the solemn and divine harmonies of music, (²⁸) heard or learned ; either whilst the skilful organist plies his grave and fancied descant in lofty fugues, or the whole symphony with artful and unimaginable touches adorn and grace the well-studied chords of some choice composer ; sometimes the lute or soft organ-stop waiting on elegant voices, either to religious, martial, or civil ditties ; which, if wise men and prophets be not extremely out, have a great power over dispositions and manners, to smooth and make them gentle from rustic harshness and distempered passions. (²⁹) The like also would

puberty all violent exercises and forced regimens are pernicious ; which is clear from the fact that, of those who won the prize in boyhood in the Olympic contests, not above two or three had again proved victors in manhood.—*Politics*, I. v. c. 4 ; see also I. ii. c. 3. Plato, in his *Republic*, observes that too continuous an application to gymnastics, to the neglect of music, engenders ferocity.—*Opera*, t. vi. 152.

(²⁸) In his *L'Allegro* he thus describes the delights of music :

“ And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.”

(²⁹) He here undoubtedly alludes to Plato, who, in various

not be inexpedient after meat, to assist and cherish nature in her first concoction, and send their minds back to study in good tune and satisfaction. Where having followed it close under vigilant eyes, till about two hours before supper, they are, by a sudden alarum or watchword, to be called out to their military motions, under sky or covert, according to the season, as was the Roman wont ;⁽³⁰⁾ first on foot, then, as their age permits, on horseback, to all the art of cavalry ; that having in sport, but with much exactness and daily muster, served out the rudiments of their soldiership, in all the skill

parts of his works, speaks enthusiastically of the pleasures to be derived from music, which he regarded as a powerful instrument of education. Nowhere, however, has he perhaps expressed himself more beautifully than in the third book of his Republic, (t. vi. p. 153, edit. Bekk.) where Socrates explains to Glaucon in what manner the citizens of a free state should be nurtured : “Whoever is captivated by music, and, yielding himself up to its soothing influence, suffers it to pour in upon his soul through the ears, as through a funnel, those ravishing, sweet, plaintive harmonies we have enumerated, and passes all his days in the alternate joy and sadness produced by the powers of melody, must inevitably be softened, like steel in the fire, and lose whatever was harsh or rude in his nature. Indulged in to excess, however, music emasculates instead of invigorating the mind, causing a relaxation of the intellectual faculties, and debasing the warrior into an effeminate slave, destitute of all nerve and energy of soul.” From the history of modern Italy numerous facts in support of this theory might be collected. The Latin translation of the above passage, by Marsilius Ficinus, without being a strictly literal rendering of the original, is remarkable for great beauty and elevation of language.

(30) On the military exercises of the Romans, see Gibbon, History, &c. vol. i. p. 17—27, and Lipsius de Militiâ Romanâ, l. v. Opera, t. iii. p. 317—340. In the latter work the subject is rendered more intelligible by engravings, rude but useful.

of embattling, marching, encamping, fortifying, besieging, and battering, with all the helps of ancient and modern stratagems, tactics, and warlike maxims, they may as it were out of a long war come forth renowned and perfect commanders in the service of their country. They would not then, if they were trusted with fair and hopeful armies, suffer them, for want of just and wise discipline, to shed away from about them like sick feathers, though they be never so oft supplied; they would not suffer their empty and unrecruitable colonels of twenty men in a company, to quaff out or convey into secret hoards, the wages of a delusive list, and a miserable remnant; (³¹) yet in the meanwhile to be overmastered with a score or two of drunkards, the only soldiery left about them, or else to comply with all rapines and violences. No, certainly, if they knew aught of that knowledge that belongs to good men or good governors, they would not suffer these things.

22. But to return to our own institute; besides these constant exercises at home, there is another opportunity of gaining experience to be won from pleasure itself abroad; in those vernal seasons of the year when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against nature, not to go out and see her riches, and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and earth. (³²) I should not therefore

(³¹) Tavernier gives a curious account of this mode of plundering the public, in the armies of modern Persia; and the practice is not unknown nearer home.

(³²) Everywhere in Milton's works we discover traces of his

be a persuader to them of studying much then, after two or three years that they have well laid their grounds, but to ride out in companies, with prudent and staid guides, to all the quarters of the land : learning and observing all places of strength, all commodities of building and of soil, for towns and tillage, harbours and ports for trade. Sometimes taking sea as far as to our navy, to learn there also what they can in the practical knowledge of sailing and of sea-fight.

23. These ways would try all their peculiar gifts of nature; and if there were any secret excellence among them would fetch it out, and give it fair opportunities to advance itself by, which could not but mightily redound to the good of this nation, and bring into fashion again those old admired virtues and excellencies, with far more advantage now in this purity of Christian knowledge. Nor shall we then need the monsieurs of Paris to take our hopeful youth into their slight and prodigal custodies, and send them over, back again, transformed into mimies, apes, and kickshaws. But if they desire to see other countries at three or four and twenty years of age, not to learn principles, but to enlarge experience, and make wise observation, they will by that time be such as shall deserve the regard and honour of all men where they pass, and the society and friendship of those in all places

admiration of external nature. Who does not remember that exquisite passage in the Paradise Lost ?

"Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet
With song of earliest birds, pleasant the sun," &c.

who are best and most eminent. And, perhaps, then other nations will be glad to visit us for their breeding, or else to imitate us in their own country.

24. Now, lastly, for their diet there cannot be much to say, save only that it would be best in the same house; for much time else would be lost abroad, and many ill habits got; and that it should be plain, healthful, and moderate, I suppose is out of controversy. Thus, Mr. Hartlib, you have a general view in writing, as your desire was, of that which at several times I had discoursed with you concerning the best and noblest way of education; not beginning, as some have done, from the cradle, which yet might be worth many considerations, if brevity had not been my scope; many other circumstances also I could have mentioned, but this, to such as have the worth in them to make trial, for light and direction may be enough. Only I believe that this is not a bow for every man to shoot in, that counts himself a teacher; but will require sinews almost equal to those which Homer gave Ulysses; yet I am withal persuaded that it may prove much more easy in the assay, than it now seems at distance, and much more illustrious; howbeit, not more difficult than I imagine, and that imagination presents me with nothing but very happy, and very possible according to best wishes; if God have so decreed, and this age have spirit and capacity enough to apprehend.

AREOPAGITICA :
A SPEECH FOR THE
LIBERTY OF UNLICENSED PRINTING,
TO THE PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND.

Τούλένθερον δ' ἐκεῖνο, οὐ τις θελει πόλει
Χρησόν τι βούλευμ' εἰς μέσον φέρειν, ἔχων.
Καὶ ταῦθ', οὐ χρῆζων, λαμπρὸς ἔσθ', οὐ μὴ θέλων,
Σιγῇ, τι τετων ἐσιν ισαίτερον πόλει ;

Euripid. Hicetid.

This is true liberty, when free-born men,
Having to advise the public, may speak free,
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise :
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace :
What can be juster in a state than this ?

Euripid. Hicetid.

MILTON's mind, having now reached maturity, yielded in profusion those rich and incomparable fruits which are the natural produce of genius and learning. The "Areopagitica," as well as the "Tractate on Education," was published in 1644, with the design of convincing the Presbyterians—who, being now in power, were mimicking the intolerant example set them by the Prelates—of the iniquity and impolicy of endeavouring the suppression of opinions by force. He saw, with that quick intuition which belongs to elevated minds, how vain the attempt must always prove to confine thought, or the active expression of it, by material shackles; and, with the honesty and magnanimity of a devout Christian, he sought to vindicate for others the liberty he had, while his party was the weaker, contended for himself. In performing this duty he exerted the utmost energy of his mind. Passing in rapid review the practices of the most refined nations of ancient and modern times, he shows freedom in connexion with whatever is of highest excellence in government, or of greatest virtue and enlightenment in society; while licensing and the tyranny of opinion, originating in barbarous superstition, have always gone hand in hand with bad government, and either found the people ignorant and slothful, or, if tamely submitted to, have rendered them so. Injustice, if productive of no other advantage, serves at least to rouse good and noble natures to express their detestation of it; and thus it has proved serviceable to posterity that the Presbyterians misused their power; for had they acted uprightly, the "Areopagitica" had never been written. By almost all writers this discourse has been regarded as Milton's masterpiece. Perhaps it is so. Nothing, in fact, can surpass those vivid, inspiring flashes of eloquence which lighten over its periods, and find their way to the very heart and root of all our noblest sympathies. Nothing can be more replete with grandeur than that creative, life-infusing spirit, which breathes through the whole, kindling up an intense love of the good and the beautiful, awakening in every breast a devout admiration for those possessors of virtue and genius commissioned by heaven to reveal to us how much of the great and godlike there is in man, animating even the feeble and vacillating with at least a temporary enthusiasm for freedom, and that virtuous spirit of martyrdom by which all its advocates should be inflamed. He works out his problem triumphantly. He proves, what had already been hinted at in the "Animadversions on the Remonstrant's Defence," that the liberty of the press is no less beneficial to governments than to the people. Nevertheless, his work had not, as Dr. Birch observes, the proper effect upon the Presbyterians, who having at that time the ascendant, were as tenacious of continuing the restraints upon others, as they had been loud in their complaints of them when imposed on

themselves. According to Toland,* however, so great was the influence of the Discourse, that even one of the licensers themselves, by name Mabbot, having first assigned his reasons, retired from the office in 1645. But this, as appears from White-locke,† is erroneous, for Mabbot did not resign office until May 22, 1649; when upon his desire, and having assigned his reasons against licensing books to be printed, he was discharged of that employment. We find a particular account of this transaction in a quarto weekly paper, entitled, “A Perfect Diurnal of some Passages in Parliament, and the daily Proceedings of the Army under his Excellency the Lord Fairfax, from May 21 to May 28, 1649.” No. 304, page 2531.‡

* Life of Milton, p. 23.

† Memorials, &c. p. 403, edit. of Lond. 1732.

‡ Birch's Life of Milton, p. XXX.

AREOPAGITICA.

1. THEY, who to states and governors of the commonwealth direct their speech, high court of parliament! or wanting such access in a private condition, write that which they foresee may advance the public good ; I suppose them, as at the beginning of no mean endeavour, not a little altered and moved inwardly in their minds ; some with doubt of what will be the success, others with fear of what will be the censure ; some with hope, others with confidence of what they have to speak. And me perhaps each of these dispositions, as the subject was whereon I entered, may have at other times variously affected ; and likely might in these foremost expressions now also disclose which of them swayed most, but that the very attempt of this address thus made, and the thought of whom it hath recourse to, hath got the power within me to a passion, far more welcome than incidental to a preface.

2. Which though I stay not to confess ere any ask, I shall be blameless, if it be no other than the joy and gratulation which it brings to all who

wish to promote their country's liberty ; whereof this whole discourse proposed will be a certain testimony, if not a trophy. (¹) For this is not the liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the commonwealth : that let no man in this world expect ; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty obtained that wise men look for. To which if I now manifest, by the very sound of this which I shall utter, that we are already in good part arrived, and yet from such a steep disadvantage of tyranny and superstition grounded into our principles, as was beyond the manhood of a Roman recovery, it will be attributed first, as is most due, to the strong assistance of God, our deliverer ; next to your faithful guidance and undaunted wisdom, lords and commons of England ! Neither is it in God's esteem, the diminution of his glory, when honourable things are spoken of good men, and worthy magistrates ; which if I now first should begin to (²) do after so fair a progress of your laudable deeds, and such a long obligement upon the whole realm to your indefatigable virtues, I might be justly

(¹) His discourse may, perhaps, be regarded, he says, as a trophy of liberty, as proving, by the boldness with which he speaks, that England was then free.

(²) He reminds the Parliament that this was not the first time he had spoken their praises, both that he might not be suspected of endeavouring to purchase a favour by fine words, and that they, on the other hand, might learn, in all they did, to seek the approbation of the public. His former panegyric occurs in the "Apology for his Early Life and Writings," §. 58—63.

reckoned among the tardiest and the unwillingest of them that praise ye.

3. Nevertheless there being three principal things, without which all praising is but courtship and flattery: first, when that only is praised which is solidly worth praise; next, when greatest likelihoods are brought, that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascribed; the other, when he who praises, by showing that such his actual persuasion is of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not; the former two of these I have heretofore endeavoured, rescuing the employment from him who went about to impair your merits with a trivial and malignant encomium; (³) the latter as belonging chiefly to mine own acquittal, that whom I so extolled I did not flatter, hath been reserved opportunely to this occasion. For he who freely magnifies what hath been nobly done, and fears not to declare as freely what might be done better, gives ye the best covenant of his fidelity; and that his loyalest affection and his hope waits on your proceedings. His highest praising is not flattery, and his plainest advice is a kind of praising; for though I should affirm and hold by argument, that it would fare better with truth, with learning, and the common-

(³) Bishop Hall's encomium is unskilful, because it betrays the insincerity of the writer. He could not conceal how unwillingly he even augured well of them; and afterwards, in his reply to Smectymnuus, the different spirit in which he addressed the king, rendered the insipidity of his praise of the parliament the more palpable.

wealth, if one of your published orders, which I should name, were called in ; yet at the same time it could not but much redound to the lustre of your mild and equal government, whenas private persons are hereby animated to think ye better pleased with public advice, than other statists have been delighted heretofore with public flattery. And men will then see what difference there is between the magnanimity of a triennial parliament, and that jealous haughtiness of prelates (⁴) and cabin counsellors that usurped of late, whenas they shall observe ye in the midst of your victories and successes more gently brooking written exceptions against a voted order, than other courts, which had produced nothing worth memory but the weak ostentation of wealth, would have endured the least signified dislike at any sudden proclamation.

(⁴) We may learn from Baxter, a great and holy man, in what light the members of the hierarchy were then very generally viewed : “ If we meet with a clergy that are high, and have a great deal of worldly interest at stake ; or if they be in councils and synods, and have got the major vote, they too easily believe that either their grandeur, reverence, names, or numbers, must give them the reputation of being orthodox, and in the right, and will warrant them to account and defame him as erroneous, heretical, schismatical, singular, factious, or proud, that presumeth to contradict them, and to know more than they ; of which not only the case of Nazianzen, Martin, and Chrysostom are sad proofs, but also the proceedings of too many general and provincial councils. And so our hard studies and darling truth must make us as owls or reproached persons among those reverend brethren, who are ignorant at easier rates, and who find it a far softer kind of life to think and say as the most or best esteemed do, than to purchase reproach and obloquy so dearly.”

— *Dying Thoughts*, p. 111, *Sacred Classics’ edition*.

4. If I should thus far presume upon the meek demeanour of your civil and gentle greatness, lords and commons! as what your published order hath directly said, that to gainsay, I might defend myself with ease, if any should accuse me of being new or insolent, did they but know how much better I find ye esteem it to imitate the old and elegant humanity of Greece, (5) than the barbaric pride of a Hunnish and Norwegian stateliness. And out of those ages, to whose polite wisdom and letters we owe that we are not yet Goths and Jutlanders, I could name him (6) who from his private

(5) Greek authors were in those times diligently studied, at least by all who aimed at distinction in politics or literature; and this will always, perhaps, be the case when a democratic feeling exists in the public mind. Hobbes, the Philistus of modern history, is accused of having, for this reason, counselled the destruction of Greek authors; but he translated Homer and Thucydides, from neither of whom could absolute monarchy derive much support.

(6) He means Isocrates, who, in a discourse, in title almost identical with his own, ventured upon the bold step here mentioned. In his sonnet to the Lady Margaret Leigh he again alludes to this great man, but without naming him:

“ As that dishonest victory
At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
Killed with report that old man eloquent.”

Dionysius of Halicarnassus entertained a no less lofty opinion of Isocrates: “ Who, says he, can read his Areopagitic discourse without improving in wisdom? Or, who but must admire the enterprise of the orator that, in addressing the Athenians on the affairs of government, had the boldness to advise the abandonment of the form of democracy then established, as highly injurious to the interests of the state: Τίς ἐξ τὸν Αρεοπαγιτικὸν ἀναγνοὺς λόγον, κ. τ. λ. Περὶ Των Ἀρκαιων Ρήτορων Ὑπομνημ. Ισοκρατης, ἦ.

house wrote that discourse to the parliament of Athens, that persuades them to change the form of democracy which was then established. Such honour was done in those days to men who professed the study of wisdom and eloquence, not only in their own country, but in other lands, that cities and signories heard them gladly, (7) and with great respect, if they had aught in public to admonish the state. Thus did Dion Prusæus, a stranger and a private orator, counsel the Rhodians against a former edict; and I abound with other like examples, which to set here would be superfluous. But if from the industry of a life wholly dedicated to studious labours, and those natural endowments haply not the worst for two and fifty degrees of northern latitude, so much must be derogated, as to count me not equal to any of those

(7) This particularly applies to the Sophists, such as Protagoras and Hippias, who travelled from city to city, lecturing on the science of polities, and leading about with them, as their pupils, young men of the most distinguished families in Greece.—*Plato, in the Hippias and Protagoras.* Hume, himself a sophist of the school of Protagoras, entertained a high veneration for the rhetorical art; and, speaking of the comparative neglect of it, by the moderns, observes:—“ We are told, that when Demosthenes was to plead, all ingenious men flocked to Athens from the most remote parts of Greece, as to the most celebrated spectacle of the world. At London you may see men sauntering in the court of requests, while the most important debate is carrying on in the two houses; and many do not think themselves sufficiently compensated for the losing of their dinners, by all the eloquence of our most celebrated speakers. When old Cibber is to act, the curiosity of several is more excited, than when our prime minister is to defend himself from a motion for his removal or impeachment.”—*Essays, &c.* 4to. p. 63.

who had this privilege, I would obtain to be thought not so inferior, (⁸) as yourselves are superior to the most of them who received their counsel; and how far you excel them, be assured, lords and commons! there can no greater testimony appear, than when your prudent spirit acknowledges and obeys the voice of reason, from what quarter (⁹) soever it be heard speaking; and renders ye as willing to repeal any act of your own setting forth, as any set forth by your predecessors.

5. If ye be thus resolved, as it were injury to think ye were not, I know not what should withhold me from presenting ye with a fit instance wherein to show both that love of truth which ye eminently profess, and that uprightness of your judgment which is not wont to be partial to yourselves; by judging over again that order which ye have ordained “to regulate printing; that no book, pamphlet, or paper shall be henceforth printed,

(⁸) A noble compliment both to himself and the Parliament. Old Montaigne would have been satisfied with this self-confidence.

(⁹) Milton appears in this passage to glance at a sportive and beautiful remark of Socrates in the Phaedrus. His youthful companion having insinuated that the Egyptian story of Theuth and Thamus, which he had just been relating, was one of his own amusing inventions, the philosopher replies: “The ministers of the Dodonæan Jupiter inform us, my friend, that the first oracles were delivered from an oak; and the people of those days, not being so wise as we are now become, cared not, so that what they heard were true, whether it proceeded from a rock or a tree. But to you, perhaps, the country of the speaker makes a difference; to discover what is true, not being your sole object.”—(T. I. p. 98.)

unless the same be first approved and licensed by such, or at least one of such, as shall be thereto appointed."] For that part which preserves justly every man's copy to himself, (¹⁰) or provides for the poor, I touch not; only wish they be not made pretences to abuse and persecute honest and painful men, who offend not in either of these particulars. But that other clause of licensing books, which we thought had died with his brother quadragesimal and matrimonial (¹¹) when the prelates expired, I

(¹⁰) See this order in Rushworth's Hist. Col. V. 335. Lord Mansfield, in the case of literary property, laid considerable stress on this passage, as an authority of weight for the judgment he was pronouncing in favour of copyrights:—"The single opinion of such a man as Milton, speaking after much consideration on the very point, is stronger than any inferences from gathering acorns, and seizing a vacant piece of ground; when the writers, so far from thinking of the very point, speak of an imaginary state of nature before the invention of letters." (Haliday's Life of Lord Mansfield, p. 232.) Our author, adds Holt White, could not have ventured to expect that his tract would be cited from the bench in such terms of praise by a Chief Justice of England.

(¹¹) However quaintly the word *quadragesimal* now sounds, we must not impute this Latin synonyme for the English adjective *lenten* to Milton as a pedantic intrusion of his own on our language. I find it in the " Ordinary," one of Cartwright's comedies:—

" But *Quadragesimal* wits, and fancies lean
As Ember weeks."

Quadragesimal licences, I conclude to have been the permissions which, even subsequently to the Reformation, were granted for eating white meats in Lent, on Ember days, and on others, which were appointed by Act of Parliament for Fish Days. Queen Elizabeth used to say, that she would never eat flesh in Lent without obtaining licence from her little black husband.

shall now attend with such a homily, as shall lay before ye, first, the inventors of it to be those whom ye will be loath to own ; next, what is to be thought in general of reading, whatever sort the books be ; and that this order avails nothing to the suppressing of scandalous, seditious, and libellous books, which were mainly intended to be suppressed. (12) Last, that it will be primely to the discouragement of all learning, and the stop of truth, not only by disexercising and blunting our abilities, in what we know already, but by hindering and cropping the discovery that might be yet further made, both in religious and civil wisdom. .

6. I deny not, but that it is of greatest concern-

(Walton's Life of Hooker, 209, ed. of 1807,) as she called Archbishop Whitgift. During the interregnum, marriages were, by an ordinance of Parliament, solemnized before a civil magistrate, and without a licence. I copy the form of a certificate on the occasion from the original now before me :—“ Sussex.—These are to certify those whom it may concern, that Thomas Holt of Petersfield, in the county of Louth, clerk, and Charity Shirley of Kirdford, in the county of Sussex, spinster, were married at Plaistow, in the parish of Kirdford, on the one and twentieth of May, by Richard Knowles, Esq. one of the Commissioners for the Peace in the said county of Sussex.

(L.S.) “ RICHARD KNOWLES.”

“ In the presence of

“ WM. MILLWOOD,

“ JOHN BEATON.”

Milton's allusion must have been to this practice. — *Holt White.*

(12) See in proof of this, Note 53, at the conclusion of this speech, where we find, by the testimony of Mabbott, himself a licenser, how easily men devised means of eluding the ridiculous severity of the law, and of converting what was intended to be a curb, into a screen and protection from punishment.

ment in the church and commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves, as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors; for books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men.⁽¹³⁾ And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. It is true, no age can restore a life, whereof, perhaps, there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse. We should be wary, therefore, what persecution we raise against the living labours of public men, how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored

(13) This magnificent metaphor furnishes an additional proof of the infinite skill with which Milton converts his reading, whether common or uncommon, into a means of enriching and enlivening his style.

up in books; since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdom; and if it extend to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life, but strikes at the ethereal and fifth essence, the breath of reason itself; slays an immortality rather than a life. But lest I should be condemned of introducing licence, while I oppose licensing, I refuse not the pains to be so much historical, as will serve to show what hath been done by ancient and famous commonwealths, against this disorder, till the very time that this project of licensing crept out of the inquisition, was catched up by our prelates, and hath caught some of our presbyters.

7. In Athens, where books and wits were ever busier than in any other part of Greece, I find but only two sorts of writings which the magistrate cared to take notice of; those either blasphemous and atheistical, or libellous. Thus the books of Protagoras (¹⁴) were, by the judges of Areopagus, com-

(¹⁴) Protagoras, in Plato's dialogue which bears his name, boasts of the boldness with which he had always professed himself a sophist; and yet he reached extreme old age before the impiety of his doctrines incurred the displeasure of the court of Areopagus. Other sophists disguised their real characters in various ways, some travelling about as teachers of music, some as architects, or physicians. With respect to the Old Comedy, no one can feel surprised that the magistrates should at length have interfered with its licentiousness; for we know, from the example of Aristophanes, that neither the loftiest genius, nor the purest virtue, could escape its audacious slanders. Mr. Holt White, who deserves much praise for his laborious endeavours to throw light on this work of Milton, observes, after Velleius Pa-

manded to be burnt, and himself banished the territory for a discourse, begun with his confessing not to know “ whether there were gods, or whether not.” And against defaming, it was agreed that none should be traduced by name, as was the manner of *Vetus Comœdia*, whereby we may guess how they censured libelling ; and this course was quick enough, as Cicero writes, to quell both the desperate wits of other atheists, and the open way of defaming, as the event showed. Of other sects and opinions, though tending to voluptuousness, and the denying of divine Providence, they took no heed. Therefore we do not read that either Epicurus, or that libertine school of Cyrene, or what the Cynic impudence uttered, was ever questioned by the laws. Neither is it recorded, that the writings of those old comedians were suppressed, though the acting of them were forbid ; and that Plato commended the reading of Aristophanes, the loosest of them all, to his royal scholar, Dionysius, is commonly known, and may be excused, if holy Chrysostom, (¹⁵) as is reported,

terculus, that Pindar was the only Greek writer of eminence who was not a native of Attica. But this is an extraordinary mistake : Aristotle was a native of Macedonian Thrace, Hippocrates of Cos, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, Lucian of Samosata, Polybius of Megalopolis, Plutarch of Chæronea in Bœotia, &c. and these are “ writers of eminence.”

(¹⁵) He is said by Aldus Manutius, but I know not his authority, to have commonly slept with the comedies of this writer under his pillow ; and traces of his comic reading are said to be still visible in his homilies. The critics “ unanimously attribute to the Christian orator,” says Gibbon, “ the free command of an

nightly studied so much the same author, and had the art to cleanse a scurrilous vehemence into the style of a rousing sermon.

8. That other leading city of Greece, Lacedæmon, considering that Lycurgus their lawgiver was so addicted to elegant learning, as to have been the first that brought out of Ionia the scattered works of Homer, and sent the poet Thales⁽¹⁶⁾ from Crete, to prepare and mollify the Spartan surliness with his smooth songs and odes, the better to plant among them law and civility ; it is to be wondered how museless and unbookish they were,

elegant and copious language ; the judgment to conceal the advantages he derived from the knowledge of rhetoric and philosophy ; an inexhaustible fund of metaphors and similitudes, of ideas and images, to vary and illustrate the most familiar topics ; the happy art of engaging the passions in the service of virtue ; and of exposing the folly, as well as the turpitude, of vice, almost with the truth and spirit of a dramatic representation.”—(*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, V. 400, 401.)

(¹⁶) This is an error, probably typographical. The poet here intended was named not Thales but Thaletas. He was a native of Elyrus in Crete, and is said to have purified Sparta with music when attacked by the plague.—(*Plutarch. de Music.* 42.) Thaletas flourished about 620, B. C. several ages after Lycurgus, and was the first who brought the Cretic or Pæonian metre into general use. (*Müller, “History and Antiquities of the Doric Race,”* i. 363, 372.) This learned writer observes, (ii. 14.) that chronology forbids our giving credit to those authors who pretend that Thaletas was the instructor of Lycurgus, since, according to undoubted testimony, he belongs to a later period. Plutarch, he adds, dates the second epoch of Spartan music from Thaletas the Elyrian,—whose skill was derived from the ancient sacred minstrels of the neighbouring town of Tarrha,—and from Xenodamus of Cythera, and Xenocrates the Locrian, &c. (ii. 334.)

minding nought but the feats of war.⁽¹⁷⁾ There needed no licensing of books among them, for they disliked all but their own laconic apophthegms, and took a slight occasion to chase Archilochus out of their city, perhaps for composing in a higher strain than their own soldiery ballads and roundels could reach to; or if it were for his broad verses, they were not therein so cautious, but they were as dissolute in their promiscuous conversing; whence Euripides⁽¹⁸⁾ affirms, in *Andromache*, that their women were all unchaste.

9. This much may give us light after what sort of books were prohibited among the Greeks. The Romans also for many ages trained up only to a military roughness, resembling most the Lacedæmonian guise, knew of learning little but what their twelve tables⁽¹⁹⁾ and the pontific college with their augurs and flamens taught them in religion and law; so unacquainted with other learning, that when Carneades and Critolaus, with the stoic Diogenes, coming ambassadors to Rome, took

(¹⁷) On this question see Müller's "History and Antiquities of the Doric Race," ii. 328—422.

(¹⁸) Aristotle, also, animadverts severely on the licentiousness and immodesty of the Spartan women, whom he accuses of having, during the invasion of the Thebans, caused more evil than the arms of the enemy. Like all martial nations, the Lacedæmonians, he says, were governed by their wives; and to this circumstance many imperfections of their state might be traced. (*Politics*, l. ii. c. 7.) The verses of Euripides referred to, commence, οὐδὲν εἰ ξούλοιτό τις. κ. τ. λ. (*Androm.* v. 595, sqq.)

(¹⁹) On the ancient laws of Rome both regal and decemviral, see Lipsius's collection, *Opera*, t. iv. p. 323. sqq.

thereby occasion to give the city a taste of their philosophy, they were suspected for seducers by no less a man than Cato the censor, (²⁰) who moved it in the senate to dismiss them speedily, and to banish all such Attic babblers out of Italy. But Scipio and others of the noblest senators withstood him and his old Sabine austerity; honoured and admired the men; and the censor himself at last, in his old age, fell to the study of that whereof before he was so scrupulous. And yet, at the same time, Nævius and Plautus, the first Latin comedians, had filled the city with all the borrowed scenes of Menander and Philemon. (²¹) Then began to be considered there also what was to be done to libellous books and authors; for Nævius was quickly cast into prison for his unbridled pen, and released by the tribunes upon his recantation: we read also that libels were burnt, and the makers punished, by Augustus.

10. The like severity, no doubt, was used, if aught were impiously written against their esteemed gods. Except in these two points, how the world

(²⁰) This odious old savage, who sold or starved to death his worn out slaves, might well be an enemy to Greek literature; nevertheless, in the decline of life he courted the Attic muse, and is said to have made considerable progress in the knowledge of Grecian history.—(*Corn. Nep. in Vitâ. c. 3.*) In speaking of Carneades, Cicero says: “Erat etiam Metrodorus, qui cum illis unâ ipsum illum Carneadem diligentius audierat, hominum omnium in dicendo, ut ferebant, acerrimum et copiosissimum.”—(*De Orat. i. 11.*) On his visit to Rome, see *De Oratore*, ii. 37.

(²¹) On the Roman comic writers, see the dissertation of Daniel Heinsius, prefixed to the Elzevir edition of Terence.

went in books, the magistrate kept no reckoning. And therefore Lucretius, (²²) without impeachment, versifies his Epicurism to Memmius, and had the honour to be set forth the second time by Cicero, so great a father of the commonwealth; although himself disputes against that opinion in his own writings. Nor was the satirical sharpness or naked plainness of Lucilius, or Catullus, or Flaccus, by any order prohibited. And for matters of state, the story of Titus Livius, though it extolled that part which Pompey held, was not therefore suppressed by Octavius Cæsar, of the other faction. But that Naso was by him banished in his old age, for the wanton poems of his youth, was but a mere covert of state over some secret cause; (²³) and besides, the books were neither ba-

(²²) Lucretius is, perhaps, the only poet inspired by materialism. It was not likely, however, that he should be disturbed in the promulgation of Epicureanism in a country where senators hesitated not to express the same opinions before the great council of the nation, as was done by Cæsar in the debates on the Catilinarian conspiracy.

(²³) This very curious point of ancient history has never been cleared up. We are still ignorant why Ovid was banished: but whatever may have been the cause, we cannot regret a circumstance which emancipated him from the enervating vices of Rome, and gave rise to those curious works in which he describes the manners of the barbarians among whom he lived. "The nine books of poetical epistles, which Ovid composed during the first seven years of his melancholy exile, possess, beside the merit of elegance, a double value. They exhibit a picture of the human mind under very singular circumstances: and they contain many curious observations, which no Roman, except Ovid, could have an opportunity of making."—(Gibbon. *Hist. of Decline, &c.* iii. 121. note.)

nished nor called in. From hence we shall meet with little else but tyranny in the Roman empire, (²⁴) that we may not marvel, if not so often bad as good books were silenced. I shall therefore deem to have been large enough, in producing what among the ancients was punishable to write, save only which, all other arguments were free to treat on.

11. By this time the emperors were become Christians, whose discipline in this point I do not find to have been more severe than what was formerly in practice. The books of those whom they took to be grand heretics were examined, refuted, and condemned in the general councils; and not till then were prohibited, or burnt, by authority of the emperor. As for the writings of heathen authors, unless they were plain invectives against Christianity, as those of Porphyrius and Proclus, they met with no interdict that can be cited, till about the year 400, in a Carthaginian council, wherein bishops themselves were forbid to read the books of Gentiles, but heresies they might read; while others long before them, on the contrary, scrupled more the books of heretics, than of Gentiles. And that the primitive councils and bishops were wont only to declare what books were not

(²⁴) The fiercely persecuting spirit of the emperors soon taught the Romans the difference between a free and a tyrannical government. Tacitus abounds with examples, none of which, perhaps, are more striking than that of Cremutius Cordus.

commendable, passing no further, but leaving it to each one's conscience to read or to lay by, till after the year 800, is observed already by Padre Paolo, the great unmasker of the Trentine council. After which time the popes of Rome, engrossing what they pleased of political rule into their own hands, extended their dominion over men's eyes, as they had before over their judgments, burning and prohibiting to be read what they fancied not; yet sparing in their censures, and the books not many which they so dealt with; till Martin the Fifth, by his bull, not only prohibited, but was the first that excommunicated the reading of heretical books; for about that time Wickliffe and Husse growing terrible, were they who first drove the papal court to a stricter policy of prohibiting. Which course Leo the Tenth and his successors followed, until the council of Trent and the Spanish inquisition engendering together, brought forth or perfected those catalogues and expurging indexes, that rake through the entrails of many an old good author, with a violation worse than any could be offered to his tomb.

12. Nor did they stay in matters heretical, but any subject that was not to their palate, they either condemned in a prohibition, or had it straight into the new purgatory of an index. To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the press also as well as of Paradise)

unless it were approved and licensed under the hands of two or three gluttonous friars. For example :

Let the chancellor Cini be pleased to see if in this present work be contained aught that may withstand the printing.

Vincent Rabbata, vicar of Florence.

I have seen this present work, and find nothing athwart the catholic faith and good manners ; in witness whereof I have given, &c.

Nicolo Cini, chancellor of Florence.

Attending the precedent relation, it is allowed that this present work of Davanzati may be printed,

Vincent Rabbata, &c.

It may be printed, July 15.

Friar Simon Mompei d'Amelia, chancellor of the Holy Office in Florence.

13. Sure they have a conceit, if he of the bottomless pit had not long since broke prison, that this quadruple exorcism would bar him down. I fear their next design will be to get into their custody the licensing of that which they say Claudius intended, (²⁵) but went not through with. Vouchsafe to see another of their forms, the Roman stamp ;

Imprimatur, If it seem good to the reverend master of the holy palace, Belcastro, vicegerent.

Imprimatur,
Friar Nicholo Rodolphi, master of the holy palace.

14. Sometimes five imprimaturs are seen together dialogue wise in the piazza of one titlepage,

(²⁵) Quo veniam daret flatum crepitumque ventris in convivio emittendi.—*Sueton. in Claudio.*—MILTON.

complimenting and ducking each to other with their shaven reverences, whether the author, who stands by in perplexity at the foot of his epistle, shall to the press or to the sponge. These are the pretty responsories, these are the dear antiphonies, that so bewitched of late our prelates and their chaplains, with the goodly echo they made; and besotted us to the gay imitation of a lordly imprimatur, one from Lambeth-house, another from the west end of Paul's; so apishly romanizing, that the word of command still was set down in Latin; as if the learned grammatical pen that wrote it would cast no ink without Latin; or perhaps, as they thought, because no vulgar tongue was worthy to express the pure conceit of an imprimatur; but rather, as I hope, for that our English, the language of men ever famous and foremost in the achievements of liberty, will not easily find servile letters enow to spell such a dictatory presumption Englished.

15. And thus ye have the inventors and the original of book licensing ripped up and drawn as lineally as any pedigree. We have it not, that can be heard of, from any ancient state, or polity, or church, nor by any statute left us by our ancestors elder or later; nor from the modern custom of any reformed city or church abroad; but from the most antichristian council, and the most tyrannous inquisition that ever inquired. Till then books were ever as freely admitted into the world as any other birth; the issue of the brain was no more stifled than the issue of the womb: no envious

Juno sat cross-legged over the nativity of any man's intellectual offspring; but if it proved a monster, who denies but that it was justly burnt, or sunk into the sea? But that a book, in worse condition than a peccant soul, should be to stand before a jury ere it be born to the world, and undergo yet in darkness the judgment of Radamanth and his colleagues, ere it can pass the ferry backward into light, was never heard before, till that mysterious iniquity, provoked and troubled at the first entrance of reformation, sought out new limboes and new hells wherein they might include our books also within the number of their damned. And this was the rare morsel so officiously snatched up, and so illfavouredly imitated by our inquisituirient bishops, and the attendant minorites their chaplains. That ye like not now these most certain authors of this licensing order, and that all sinister intention was far distant from your thoughts, when ye were importuned the passing it, all men who know the integrity of your actions, and how ye honour truth, will clear ye readily.

16. But some will say, what though the inventors were bad, the thing for all that may be good. It may so; yet if that thing be no such deep invention, but obvious and easy for any man to light on, and yet best and wisest commonwealths through all ages and occasions have forborne to use it, and falsest seducers and oppressors of men were the first who took it up, and to no other purpose but to obstruct and hinder the first approach of reformation; I am of those who believe, it will be

a harder alehymy than Lullius (²⁶) ever knew, to sublimate any good use out of such an invention. Yet this only is what I request to gain from this reason, that it may be held a dangerous and suspicious fruit, as certainly it deserves, for the tree that bore it, until I can dissect one by one the properties it has. But I have first to finish, as was propounded, what is to be thought in general of reading books, whatever sort they be, and whether be more the benefit or the harm that thence proceeds.

17. Not to insist upon the examples of Moses, Daniel, and Paul, who were skilful in all the learning of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Greeks, which could not probably be without reading their books of all sorts, in Paul especially, who thought it no defilement to insert into holy Scripture the sentences of three Greek poets, (²⁷) and one of them a tragedian; the question was notwithstanding some-

(²⁶) Raymond Lully was born at Palma, capital of the island of Majorca, about the year 1235. His system, known under the name of *Ars Lulliana*, was very celebrated in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. Some authors, as Bouelles, say he died at Tunis, in 1314: others contend that having been wounded on the coast of Africa, whither he had gone to convert the Mohammedans, he sailed for Majorca, and died in sight of land, in 1315, aged eighty years. Vernon relates that he visited England for the purpose of inciting king Edward to make war against the Turks; but this is altogether erroneous. His works are exceedingly numerous.

(²⁷) The three Greek poets quoted by St. Paul, are, 1. the Cretan Epimenides, Epist. to Titus, i. 12; 2. Aratus, Acts, xvii. 28; and 3. Euripides, or, according to others, Menander, 1 Corinth. xv. 33.

times controverted among the primitive doctors, but with great odds on that side which affirmed it both lawful and profitable, as was then evidently perceived, when Julian the Apostate, and subtlest enemy to our faith, made a decree forbidding Christians the study of heathen learning; (²⁸) for, said he, they wound us with our own weapons, and

. (²⁸) "The edict itself," observes Gibbon, "which is still extant among the epistles of Julian, (xlii.) may be compared with the loose invectives of Gregory, (Orat. iii. p. 96.) Tillemont (Mem. Eccles. t. vii. p. 1291) has collected the seeming differences of ancients and moderns. They may be easily reconciled. The Christians were *directly* forbid to teach, they were *indirectly* forbid to learn; since they would not frequent the schools of the Pagans." Of the Apostate's prohibiting the Christians from teaching, he gives the following account: "A just and severe censure has been inflicted on the law which prohibited the Christians from teaching the arts of grammar and rhetoric. The motives alleged by the emperor to justify this partial and oppressive measure, might command, during his lifetime, the silence of slaves, and the applause of flatterers. Julian abuses the ambiguous meaning of a word which might be indifferently applied to the language and the religion of the Greeks: he contemptuously observes, that the men who exalt the merit of implicit faith are unfit to claim or to enjoy the advantages of science; and he vainly contends, that if they refuse to adore the gods of Homer and Demosthenes, they ought to content themselves with expounding Luke and Matthew in the churches of the Galilæans. In all the cities of the Roman world, the education of the youth was entrusted to masters of grammar and rhetoric; who were elected by the magistrates, maintained at the public expense, and distinguished by many lucrative and honourable privileges. The edict of Julian appears to have included the physicians, and professors of all the liberal arts; and the emperor, who reserved to himself the approbation of the candidates, was authorised by the laws to corrupt, or to punish, the religious constancy of the most learned of the Christians."—(*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, iv. 111, 112, and note.)

with our own arts and sciences they overcome us. And indeed the Christians were put so to their shifts by this crafty means, and so much in danger to decline into all ignorance, that the two Appollinarii were fain, as a man may say, to coin all the seven liberal sciences out of the Bible, reducing it into divers forms of orations, poems, dialogues, even to the calculating of a new Christian grammar.

18. But, saith the historian, Socrates, the providence of God provided better than the industry of Appollinarius and his son, by taking away that illiterate law with the life of him who devised it. So great an injury they then held it to be deprived of Hellenic learning ; and thought it a persecution more undermining, and secretly decaying the church, than the open cruelty of Decius or Dioclesian. And perhaps it was with the same politic drift that the devil whipped St. Jerome in a lenten dream, for reading Cicero ; or else it was a phantasm, bred by the fever which had then seized him. (29) For had an angel been his discipliner, unless it were for dwelling too much on Cieronianisms, and had chastised the reading, not the vanity, it had been plainly partial ; first to correct him for grave Cicero, and not for scurril Plautus, whom he

(29) St. Jerome and the devil. St. Jerome is quite positive, however, it was not a dream : “*Nec vero sopor ille fuerat, aut vana somnia, quibus sæpe deludimur ;*” and his reason is, that, on issuing from the vision, he found himself beaten black and blue, which had never happened, he says, in any former dream. It never occurred to him that in rolling about on his couch he might have bruised himself in several places, without the aid of a spirit, good or evil.—(*Opera*, t. iv. p. 42.)

confesses to have been reading not long before; next to correct him only, and let so many more ancient fathers wax old in those pleasant and florid studies, without the lash of such a tutoring apparition; insomuch that Basil teaches how some good use may be made of Margites, a sportful poem, not now extant, writ by Homer; (³⁰) and why not then of Morgante, an Italian romance much to the same purpose?

19. But if it be agreed we shall be tried by visions, there is a vision recorded by Eusebius, far ancienter than this tale of Jerome, to the nun Eustochium, and besides, has nothing of a fever in it. Dionysius Alexandrinus was, about the year 240, a person of great name in the church, for piety and learning, who had wont to avail himself much against heretics, by being conversant in their books; until a certain presbyter laid it scrupulously to his conscience, how he durst venture himself among those defiling volumes. The worthy man, loath to give offence, fell into a new debate with himself, what was to be thought; when suddenly a vision sent from God (it is his own epistle that so avers

(³⁰) Aristotle, in his Poetics, and Plato,—if the Second Alei-brades be his,—attribute the Margites to Homer. (*Edit. Bekk.* ii. 291.) But, though this certainly proves the great antiquity of the poem, modern critics dispute its authenticity. There existed among the ancients another work on the same subject, written in alternate hexameter and trimeter verses, which, with the Batrachomoumachia, was supposed to have been the production of Pigres of Halicarnassus, brother of that Artemisia who fought so bravely among the admirals of Xerxes.—(*Payne Knight, Prolegom. ad Homer. 5—7.*)

it) confirmed him in these words: “Read any books whatever come to thy hands, for thou art sufficient both to judge aright, and to examine each matter.” To this revelation he assented the sooner, as he confesses, because it was answerable to that of the apostle to the Thessalonians: “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.”

20. And he might have added another remarkable saying of the same author: “To the pure, all things are pure;” not only meats and drinks, but all kind of knowledge, whether of good or evil: the knowledge cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defiled. For books are as meats and viands are; some of good, some of evil substance; and yet God in that unapocryphal vision said without exception, “Rise, Peter, kill and eat;” leaving the choice to each man’s discretion. Wholesome meats to a vitiated stomach differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty mind are not unapplicable to occasions of evil. Bad meats will scarce breed good nourishment in the healthiest concoction; but herein the difference is of bad books, that they to a discreet and judicious reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn, and to illustrate.⁽³¹⁾ Whereof what better witness can ye expect I should produce,

(31) On this point, in which the leading principle of the whole discourse is involved, Mr. Mitford, in his Life of Milton, has made several very judicious observations. “Dr. Johnson,” he remarks, “considers the argument which it (the Areopagitica) discusses, to be of very difficult solution. I shall content myself

than one of your own now sitting in parliament, the chief of learned men reputed in this land, Mr. Selden; whose volume of natural and national laws proves, not only by great authorities brought together, but by exquisite reasons and theorems almost mathematically demonstrative, that all opinions, yea errors, known, read, and collated, are of main service and assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest.

21. I conceive, therefore, that when God did enlarge the universal diet of man's body, (saving ever the rules of temperance,) he then also, as before, left arbitrary the dieting and repasting of our minds; as wherein every mature man might have to exercise his own leading capacity. How great a virtue is temperance, how much of moment through the whole life of man! Yet God commits the managing so great a trust, without particular law or prescription, wholly to the demeanour of every grown man. And therefore when he himself

with observing, that when a nation becomes sufficiently enlightened to demand the removal of those restrictions of the press, which have been imposed when governments were arbitrary, and the people ignorant; the correction of the evils attendant on its liberty, must be found, not in the punishment of the offenders, but in the good sense and moral feeling of the community. It is in this way that virtue is stronger than vice, that truth triumphs over falsehood, and law is superior to offence. Johnson's observation, that 'if every sceptic in theology may teach his follies, there can be no religion,' falls to the ground, when it is remembered that *our* religion was born amid disbelief and doubt, and has grown up and increased among every variety of heresy and form of scepticism that the ingenuity of man could devise." p. xliv. xlvi.

tabled the Jews from heaven, that omer, which was every man's daily portion of manna, is computed to have been more than might have well sufficed the heartiest feeder thrice as many meals. For those actions which enter into a man, rather than issue out of him, and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivate under a perpetual childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser; there were but little work left for preaching, if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which heretofore were governed only by exhortation. Solomon informs us, that much reading is a weariness to the flesh; (³²) but neither he, nor other inspired author, tells us that such or such reading is unlawful; yet

(³²) In that most pleasant book of Baxter, which he has entitled his "Dying Thoughts," there occurs a fine commentary on this text:—"Alas! how dear a vanity is this knowledge! he exclaims. That which is but theoretical and notional, is but a tickling delectation of the phantasy or mind, little differing from a pleasant dream: but how many hours, what gazing of the wearied eye, what stretching thoughts of the impatient brain must it cost us, if we will attain to an excellency! Well saith Solomon, 'much reading is a weariness to the flesh,' and 'he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.' How many hundred studious days and weeks, and how many hard and tearing thoughts, hath my little, very little knowledge, cost me! And how much infirmity and painfulness to my flesh, increase of painful diseases, and loss of bodily ease and health! How much pleasure to myself of other kinds, and how much acceptance with men, have I lost by it, which I might easily have had in a more conversant and plausible way of life!" Yet, when he comes to enumerate the valuable and delightful things of which death must deprive him, mark how prominent a place is occupied by his

certainly had God thought good to limit us herein, it had been much more expedient to have told us what was unlawful, than what was wearisome.

22. As for the burning of those Ephesian books by St. Paul's converts; it is replied, the books were magic, the Syriac so renders them. It was a private act, a voluntary act, and leaves us to a voluntary imitation: the men in remorse burnt those books which were their own; the magistrate by this example is not appointed; these men practised the books, another might perhaps have read them in some sort usefully. Good and evil we know in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that those confused seeds which were imposed upon Pysche as an incessant labour to cull out, and sort asunder, were not more intermixed. It was from out the rind

books and studies. "When I die, I must depart not only from sensual delights, but from the more manly pleasures of my studies, knowledge, and converse with many wise and godly men, and from all my pleasure in reading, hearing, public and private exercises of religion, &c. I must leave my library, and turn over those pleasant books no more: I must no more come among the living, nor see the faces of my faithful friends, nor be seen of man: houses, and cities, and fields, and countries, gardens, and walks, will be nothing, as to me. I shall no more hear of the affairs of the world, of man, or wars, or other news, nor see what becomes of that beloved interest of wisdom, piety, and peace, which I desire may prosper." (p. 106—109, *Sacred Classics' edition.*) The volume is full of noble passages of this kind, which must render their author dear to all who love piety or eloquence.

of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evil, as two twins cleaving together, leaped forth into the world. And perhaps this is that doom which Adam fell into of knowing good and evil ; that is to say, of knowing good by evil.

23. As therefore the state of man now is ; what wisdom can there be to choose, what continence to forbear, without the knowledge of evil ? He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue unexercised, and unbreathed, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. (³³) Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather ; that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue therefore which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a pure ; (³⁴) her whiteness is but an excremental whiteness ; which was the reason why

(³³) *Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum
Collegisse juvat ; metaque fervidis
Evitata rotis, palmaque nobilis
Terrarum dominos evehit ad Deos.*

Horat. i. 1.

(³⁴) He had here, perhaps, in his mind Plato's beau ideal of a judge ; an old man who, in advancing through his long career,

our sage and serious poet, Spenser, (whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas,) describing true temperance under the person of Guion, brings him in with his palmer through the cave of Mammon,⁽³⁵⁾ and the bower of earthly bliss, that he might see and know, and yet abstain.

24. Since therefore the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely, and with less danger, scout into the regions of sin and falsity, than by reading all manner of tractates, and hearing all manner of reason? And this is the benefit which may be had of books promiscuously read. But of the harm that may result hence, three kinds are usually reckoned. First, is feared the infection that may spread; but then, all human learning and controversy in religious points must remove out of the world, yea, the Bible itself; for that oftentimes relates blasphemy not nicely, it describes the carnal sense of wicked men not unelegantly, it brings in holiest men passionately murmuring against providence through all the arguments of Epicurus;⁽³⁶⁾ in other great disputes it answers

has, by observing the conduct of others, obtained a thorough knowledge of vice and injustice, without ever suffering the slightest taint of either to appear in his own soul.—(*De Republicā*, l. iii. *Opera*, t. vi. p. 150.)

⁽³⁵⁾ See Sir Guion's descent into the Cave of Mammon in the Faery Queen, B. ii. Canto 7.

⁽³⁶⁾ More particularly in the Book of Ecclesiastes.

dubiously and darkly to the common reader; and ask a Talmudist what ails the modesty of his marginal Keri, that Moses and all the prophets cannot persuade him to pronounce the textual Chetiv. For these causes we all know the Bible itself put by the papist into the first rank of prohibited books. The ancientest fathers must be next removed, as Clement of Alexandria, and that Eusebian book of evangelic preparation, transmitting our ears through a hoard of heathenish obscenities to receive the gospel. Who finds not that Irenæus, Epiphanius, Jerome, and others discover more heresies than they well confute, and that oft for heresy which is the truer opinion?

25. Nor boots it to say for these, and all the heathen writers of greatest infection, if it must be thought so, with whom is bound up the life of human learning, that they wrote in an unknown tongue, so long as we are sure those languages are known as well to the worst of men, who are both most able and most diligent to instil the poison they suck, first into the courts of princes, acquainting them with the choicest delights, and criticisms of sin. As perhaps did that Petronius, whom Nero called his arbiter, the master of his revels; and that notorious ribald of Arezzo, (³⁷) dreaded and

(³⁷) Time has now so effectually buried his profligate writings in oblivion, that few, but bibliographers, appear to know of their existence. In fact, mankind are generally so just, and endued with so fine a feeling for whatever is excellent, that scarcely any but good works survive; contempt and neglect at length overwhelm all others.

yet dear to the Italian courtiers. I name not him for posterity's sake, whom Henry the Eighth named in merriment his vicar of hell. By which compendious way all the contagion that foreign books can infuse will find a passage to the people far easier and shorter than an Indian voyage, though it could be sailed either by the north of Cataio eastward, or of Canada westward, while our Spanish licensing gags the English press never so severely.

26. But on the other side, that infection which is from books of controversy in religion, is more doubtful and dangerous to the learned than to the ignorant; and yet those books must be permitted untouched by the licencer. It will be hard to instance where any ignorant man hath been ever seduced by any papistical book in English, unless it were commended and expounded to him by some of that clergy; and indeed all such tractates, whether false or true, are as the prophecy of Isaiah was to the eunuch, not to be "understood without a guide." But of our priests and doctors how many have been corrupted by studying the comments of Jesuits and Sorbonists, and how fast they could transfuse that corruption into the people, our experience is both late and sad. It is not forgot, since the acute and distinct Arminius was perverted merely by the perusing of a nameless discourse written at Delft, which at first he took in hand to confute.

27. Seeing therefore that those books, and those in great abundance which are likeliest to taint

both life and doctrine, cannot be suppressed without the fall of learning, and of all ability in disputation, and that these books of either sort are most and soonest catching to the learned, (from whom to the common people whatever is heretical or dissolute may quickly be conveyed,) and that evil manners are as perfectly learnt without books a thousand other ways which cannot be stopped, and evil doctrine not with books can propagate, except a teacher guide, which he might also do without writing, and so beyond prohibiting ; I am not unable to unfold, how this cautious enterprise of licensing can be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts. And he who were pleasantly disposed, could not well avoid to liken it to the exploit of that gallant man, who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his park gate.

28. Besides another inconvenience, if learned men be the first receivers out of books, and spreaders both of vice and error, how shall the licensers themselves be confided in, unless we can confer upon them, or they assume to themselves above all others in the land, the grace of infallibility and uncorruptedness ? And again, if it be true, that a wise man, like a good refiner, can gather gold out of the drossiest volume, and that a fool will be a fool with the best book, yea, or without book ; there is no reason that we should deprive a wise man of any advantage to his wisdom, while we seek to restrain from a fool that which being restrained will be no hinderance to his folly. For

if there should be so much exactness always used to keep that from him which is unfit for his reading, we should in the judgment of Aristotle not only, but of Solomon, and of our Saviour, not vouchsafe him good precepts, and by consequence not willingly admit him to good books; as being certain that a wise man will make better use of an idle pamphlet, than a fool will do of sacred Scripture.

29. It is next alleged, we must not expose ourselves to temptations without necessity, and next to that, not employ our time in vain things. To both these objections one answer will serve, out of the grounds already laid, that to all men such books are not temptations, nor vanities; but useful drugs and materials wherewith to temper and compose effective and strong medicines, which man's life cannot want.⁽³⁸⁾ The rest, as children and childish men, who have not the art to qualify and prepare these working minerals, well may be exhorted to forbear; but hindered forcibly they cannot be, by all the licensing that sainted inquisition could ever yet contrive; which is what I promised to deliver next: that this order of licensing conduces nothing to the end for which it was framed; and hath almost prevented me by being clear already while thus much hath been explaining. See the ingenuity of truth, who, when she gets a free and willing hand, opens herself faster than the pace of method and discourse can overtake her.

(38) That is, cannot dispense with.

It was the task which I began with, to show that no nation, or well instituted state, if they valued books at all, did ever use this way of licensing; and it might be answered, that this is a piece of prudence lately discovered.

30. To which I return, that as it was a thing slight and obvious to think on, so if it had been difficult to find out, there wanted not among them long since, who suggested such a course; which they not following, leave us a pattern of their judgment that it was not the not knowing, but the not approving, which was the cause of their not using it. Plato, a man of high authority indeed, but least of all for his Commonwealth, in the book of his laws, which no city ever yet received, fed his fancy with making many edicts to his airy burgomasters, which they who otherwise admire him, wish had been rather buried and excused in the genial cups of an academic night sitting. (39) By which laws he seems to tolerate no kind of learning,

(39) This, whether understood of the "Republic," or the "Laws," of Plato, must be taken jocularly, or as the disparaging argument of a rhetorician. For who,—though he may regard the philosopher's scheme as impracticable, and be glad that it is so,—would consent, if it depended on his will, to annihilate those extraordinary productions, teeming with original thoughts and bold speculations, which fall on the mind of the reader like fertilizing dew? We admit, however, with Aristotle, that Plato's plan of a republic is the most remote from actual politics that has ever been imagined. No other legislator has proposed a community of wives,—though something of the kind exists in India among the Nairs,—or a community of property, or common tables for the women. Phaleas of Chalcedon,—"the City of the Blind,"—who flourished about 600 years B. C. was the first

but by unalterable decree, consisting most of practical traditions, to the attainment whereof a library of smaller bulk than his own dialogues would be abundant. And there also enacts, that no poet should so much as read to any private man what he had written, until the judges and law keepers had seen it, and allowed it; but that Plato meant this law peculiarly to that commonwealth which he had imagined, and to no other, is evident. Why was he not else a lawgiver to himself, but a transgressor, and to be expelled by his own magistrates, both for the wanton epigrams and dialogues which he made, and his perpetual reading of Sophron Mimus, and Aristophanes, books of grossest infamy; and also for commending the latter of them, though he were the malicious libeller of his chief friends, to be read by the tyrant Dionysius, who had little need of such trash to spend his time on? But that he knew this licensing of poems had reference and dependence to many other provisoës there set down in his fancied republic, which in this world could have no place; and so neither he himself, nor any magistrate or city ever imitated that course, which taken apart from those other collateral injunctions must needs be vain and fruitless.

31. For if they fall upon one kind of strictness.

writer who recommended the equalization of property; but Aristotle himself, together with Solon, and the Legislator of the Locrians, considered an approach to something like equality of possessions highly conducive to the happiness of civil society.
—(*Politics*, I. ii. c. 5.)

unless their care were equal to regulate all other things of like aptness to corrupt the mind, that single endeavour they knew would be but a fond labour; to shut and fortify one gate against corruption, and be necessitated to leave others round about wide open. If we think to regulate printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man. No music must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and doric. There must be licensing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our youth, but what by their allowance shall be thought honest; for such Plato was provided of. It will ask more than the work of twenty licensers to examine all the lutes, the violins, and the guitars in every house; they must not be suffered to prattle as they do, but must be licensed what they may say. And who shall silence all the airs and madrigals that whisper softness in chambers? The windows also, and the balconies, must be thought on; these are shrewd books, with dangerous frontispieces, set to sale; who shall prohibit them, shall twenty licensers? The villages also must have their visitors to inquire what lectures the bagpipe and the rebec reads, even to the balladry and the gamut of every municipal fidler; for these are the countryman's Arcadias, and his Monte Mayors.

32. Next, what more national corruption, for which England hears ill abroad, than household gluttony; who shall be the rectors of our daily rioting? And what shall be done to inhibit the

multitudes, that frequent those houses where drunkenness (⁴⁰) is sold and harboured? Our garments also should be referred to the licensing of some more sober workmasters, to see them cut into a less wanton garb. Who shall regulate all the mixed conversation of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this country? Who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no further? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort, all evil company? These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be least hurtful, how least enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a state.

33. To sequester out of the world into Atlantic and Utopian politics, which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably. Nor is it Plato's licensing of books will do this, which necessarily pulls along with it so many other kinds of licensing, as will make us all both ridiculous and weary, and yet frustrate; but those unwritten, or at least unconstraining laws of virtuous education, religious and civil nurture, which Plato there mentions, as the bonds and ligaments of the com-

(⁴⁰) Many of the evils that afflict society are indestructible, and among these must be reckoned the public resorts of drunkenness and debauchery. Obliterated, it seems, they cannot be: but what Government has done all that might be done to reduce the evil as far as possible? Yet the force of civil and religious instruction is in their hands.

monwealth, the pillars and the sustainers of every written statute; these they be, which will bear chief sway in such matters as these, when all licensing will be easily eluded. Impunity and remissness for certain are the bane of a commonwealth ; but here the great art lies, to discern in what the law is to bid restraint and punishment, and in what things persuasion only is to work. If every action which is good or evil in man at ripe years were to be under pittance, prescription, and compulsion, what were virtue but a name, what praise could be then due to well doing, what gramercy to be sober, just, or continent ?

34. Many there be that complain of divine Providence for suffering Adam to transgress. Foolish tongues ! when God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing; (⁽⁴¹⁾) he had been else a mere artificial Adam, such an Adam as he is in the motions. We ourselves esteem not of that obedience, or love, or gift, which is of force ; God therefore left him free, set before him a provoking object ever almost in his eyes ; herein consisted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence. Wherefore did he create passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these rightly tempered are the very ingredients of virtue ? They are not skilful considerers of human things, who imagine to re-

(⁴¹) See, on the abstruse question here glanced at, Hobbes's Treatise on Liberty and Necessity ; the Leviathan, chap. xxi. ; Bramhall's Reply ; and Locke's profound investigation, Essay on the Human Understanding book ii. ch. 21.

move sin, by removing the matter of sin ; for, besides that it is a huge heap increasing under the very act of diminishing, though some part of it may for a time be withdrawn from some persons, it cannot from all, in such a universal thing as books are ; and when this is done, yet the sin remains entire. Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure, he has yet one jewel left, ye cannot bereave him of his covetousness. Banish all objects of lust, shut up all youth into the severest discipline that can be exercised in any hermitage, ye cannot make them chaste, that came not thither so : such great care and wisdom is required to the right managing of this point.

35. Suppose we could expel sin by this means ; look how much we thus expel of sin, so much we expel of virtue : for the matter of them both is the same : remove that, and ye remove them both alike. This justifies the high providence of God, who, though he commands us temperance, justice, continence, yet pours out before us even to a profuseness all desirable things, and gives us minds that can wander beyond all limit and satiety. Why should we then affect a rigour contrary to the manner of God and of nature, by abridging or scanting those means, which books, freely permitted, are both to the trial of virtue, and the exercise of truth ?

36. It would be better done, to learn that the law must needs be frivolous, which goes to restrain things, uncertainly and yet equally working to good and to evil. And were I the chooser, a dram of

well-doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hinderance of evil doing. For God sure esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person, more than the restraint of ten vicious. And albeit, whatever thing we hear or see, sitting, walking, travelling, or conversing, may be fitly called our book, and is of the same effect that writings are; yet grant the thing to be prohibited were only books, it appears that this order hitherto is far insufficient to the end which it intends. Do we not see, not once or oftener, but weekly, that continued court-libel⁽⁴²⁾ against the parliament and city, printed, as the wet sheets can witness, and dispersed among us for all that licensing can do? Yet this is the prime service a man would think wherein this order should give proof of itself. If it were executed, you will say. But certain, if execution be remiss or blindfold now, and in this particular, what will it be hereafter, and in other books?

37. If then the order shall not be vain and frustrate, behold a new labour, lords and commons, ye must repeal and proscribe all scandalous and unlicensed books already printed and divulged; after ye have drawn them up into a list, that all

(42) Court-libel. No doubt he intended the "Mercurius Aulicus;" written by Sir John Birkenhead, which was printed weekly, in one sheet, and sometimes more, in quarto; and was chiefly calculated to raise the reputation of the king's friends and commanders, and run down and ridicule those who sided with the Parliament. They came out regularly, from the beginning of 1642 to the latter end of 1645, and afterwards occasionally.—(*Biog. Brit. art. Birkenhead.*)—Holt White.

may know which are condemned, and which not ; and ordain that no foreign books be delivered out of custody, till they have been read over. This office will require the whole time of not a few overseers, and those no vulgar men. There be also books which are partly useful and excellent, partly culpable and pernicious ; this work will ask as many more officials, to make expurgations and expunctions, that the commonwealth of learning be not damnified. In fine, when the multitude of books increase upon their hands, ye must be fain to catalogue all those printers who are found frequently offending, and forbid the importation of their whole suspected typography. In a word, that this your order may be exact, and not deficient, ye must reform it perfectly according to the model of Trent and Sevil, which I know ye abhor to do.

38. Yet though ye should condescend to this, which God forbid, the order still would be but fruitless and defective to that end whereto ye meant it. If to prevent sects and schisms, who is so unread or uncatechised in story, that hath not heard of many sects refusing books as a hinderance, and preserving their doctrine unmixed for many ages, only by unwritten traditions ? The Christian faith (for that was once a schism !) is not unknown to have spread all over Asia, ere any gospel or epistle was seen in writing. If the amendment of manners be aimed at, look into Italy and Spain, whether those places be one scruple the better, the honester, the wiser, the chaster, since all the in-

quisitional rigour that hath been executed upon books.

39. Another reason, whereby to make it plain that this order will miss the end it seeks, consider by the quality which ought to be in every licenser. It cannot be denied, but that he who is made judge to sit upon the birth or death of books, whether they may be wafted into this world or not, had need to be a man above the common measure, both studious, learned, and judicious; there may be else no mean mistakes in the censure of what is passable or not; which is also no mean injury. If he be of such worth as behoves him, there cannot be a more tedious and unpleasing journeywork, a greater loss of time levied upon his head, than to be made the perpetual reader of unchosen books and pamphlets, oft-times huge volumes. There is no book that is acceptable, unless at certain seasons; but to be enjoined the reading of that at all times, and in a hand scarce legible, whereof three pages would not down at any time in the fairest print, is an imposition which I cannot believe how he that values time, and his own studies, or is but of a sensible nostril, should be able to endure. In this one thing I crave leave of the present licensers to be pardoned for so thinking; who doubtless took this office up, looking on it through their obedience to the parliament, whose command perhaps made all things seem easy and unlaborious to them; but that this short trial hath wearied them out already, their own expressions and excuses to them, who make so many journeys to solicit

their licence, are testimony enough. Seeing therefore those, who now possess the employment, by all evident signs wish themselves well rid of it, and that no man of worth, none that is not a plain unthrifit of his own hours, is ever likely to succeed them, except he mean to put himself to the salary of a press corrector, we may easily foresee what kind of licensers we are to expect hereafter, either ignorant, imperious, and remiss, or basely pecuniary. This is what I had to show, wherein this order cannot conduce to that end, whereof it bears the intention.

40. I lastly proceed from the no good it can do, to the manifest hurt it causes, in being first the greatest discouragement and affront that can be offered to learning, and to learned men. It was the complaint and lamentation of prelates, upon every least breath of a motion to remove pluralities, and distribute more equally church revenues, that then all learning would be for ever dashed and disengaged. But as for that opinion, I never found cause to think that the tenth part of learning stood or fell with the clergy: nor could I ever but hold it for a sordid and unworthy speech of any churchman, who had a competency left him. (43) If therefore ye be loath to dishearten utterly and discontent, not the mercenary crew of false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous

(43) He had already, in his Animadversions on the Remonstrant's Defence, inveighed with great vehemence against the supposition that the riches of the church were the support of learning.

sort of such as evidently were born to study and love learning for itself, not for lucre, or any other end, but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise, which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose published labours advance the good of mankind: then know, that so far to distrust the judgment and the honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning, and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a schism, or something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit, that can be put upon him.

41. What advantage is it to be a man, over it is to be a boy at school, if we have only escaped the ferula, to come under the fescue of an Imprimatur? If serious and elaborate writings, as if they were no more than the theme of a grammar-lad under his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory eyes of a temporizing and extemporizing licenser? He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to be evil, and standing to the hazard of law and penalty, has no great argument to think himself reputed in the commonwealth wherein he was born for other than a fool or a foreigner. When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him; he searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends; after all which done, he takes

himself to be informed in what he writes, as well as any that wrote before him ; if in this the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities can bring him to that state of maturity, as not to be still mistrusted and suspected, unless he carry all his considerate diligence, all his midnight watchings, and expense of Palladian oil, to the hasty view of an unleisured licenser, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferior in judgment, perhaps one who never knew the labour of bookwriting ; and if he be not repulsed, or slighted, must appear in print like a puny with his guardian, and his censor's hand on the back of his title to be his bail and surety, that he is no idiot or seducer ; it cannot be but a dishonour and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of learning.

42. And what if the author shall be one so copious of fancy, as to have many things well worth the adding, come into his mind after licensing, while the book is yet under the press, which not seldom happens to the best and diligentest writers ; and that perhaps a dozen times in one book. The printer dares not go beyond his licensed copy ; so often then must the author trudge to his leave-giver, that those his new insertions may be viewed ; and many a jaunt will be made, ere that licenser, for it must be the same man, can either be found, or found at leisure ; meanwhile either the press must stand still, which is no small damage, or the author lose his accuratest thoughts, and

send the book forth worse than he had made it, which to a diligent writer is the greatest melancholy and vexation that can befall.

43. And how can a man teach with authority, which is the life of teaching; how can he be a doctor in his book, as he ought to be, or else had better be silent, whenas all he teaches, all he delivers, is but under the tuition, under the correction of his patriarchal licenser, to blot or alter what precisely accords not with the hide-bound humour which he calls his judgment? When every acute reader upon the first sight of a pedantic licence, will be ready with these like words to ding the book a quoit's distance from him—I hate a pupil teacher, I endure not an instructor that comes to me under the wardship of an overseeing fist. I know nothing of the licenser, but that I have his own hand here for his arrogance; who shall warrant me his judgment! The state, sir, replies the stationer: but has a quick return,—The state shall be my governors, but not my critics; they may be mistaken in the choice of a licenser, as easily as this licenser may be mistaken in an author. This is some common stuff; and he might add from Sir Francis Bacon, that “such authorized books are but the language of the times.” For though a licenser should happen to be judicious more than ordinary, which will be a great jeopardy of the next succession, yet his very office and his commission enjoins him to let pass nothing but what is vulgarly received already.

44. Nay, which is more lamentable, if the work

of any deceased author, though never so famous in his lifetime, and even to this day, comes to their hands for licence to be printed, or reprinted, if there be found in his book one sentence of a venturous edge, uttered in the height of zeal, (and who knows whether it might not be the dictate of a divine spirit?) yet not suiting with every low decrepit humour of their own, though it were Knox himself, the reformer of a kingdom, that spake it, they will not pardon him their dash; the sense of that great man shall to all posterity be lost, for the fearfulness, or the presumptuous rashness of a perfunctory licenser. And to what an author this violence hath been lately done, and in what book (⁽⁴⁴⁾) of greatest consequence to be faithfully published, I could now instance, but shall forbear till a more convenient season. Yet if these things be not resented seriously and timely, by them who have the remedy in their power, but that such iron-moulds as these shall have authority to gnaw out the choicest periods of exquisitest books, and to commit such a treacherous fraud against the orphan remainders of worthiest men after death, the more sorrow will belong to that hapless race of men, whose misfortune it is to have understanding. Henceforth let no man care to learn, or care to be more than worldly wise; for certainly in higher matters to be ignorant and

(⁴⁴) Holt White conjectures that the work here alluded to was the posthumous portion of Coke's Institutes, first printed in 1641.

slothful, to be a common steadfast dunce, will be the only pleasant life, and only in request.

45. And as it is a particular disesteem of every knowing person alive, and most injurious to the written labours and monuments of the dead, so to me it seems an undervaluing and vilifying of the whole nation. I cannot set so light by all the invention, the art, the wit, the grave and solid judgment which is in England,⁽⁴⁵⁾ as that it can be comprehended in any twenty capacities how good soever; much less that it should not pass except their superintendence be over it, except it be sifted and strained with their strainers, that it should be uncurrent without their manual stamp. Truth and understanding are not such wares as to be monopolized and traded in by tickets, and statutes, and standards. We must not think to make a staple commodity of all the knowledge in the land, to mark and license it like our broad-cloth and our

(45) In his Reason of Church Government, (b. i. ch. 7,) he speaks with becoming respect of the intellectual powers and moral character of his countrymen. "The Englishman, of many other nations, is least atheistical, and bears a natural disposition of much reverence and awe towards the Deity." And "if he get the benefit once of a wise and well rectified nurture, which must first come in general from the godly vigilance of the church, I suppose that wherever mention is made of countries, manners, or men, the English people, among the first that shall be praised, may deserve to be accounted a right pious, right honest, and right hardy nation." In the commencement of the third book of the "History of England," he, indeed, denies the English the possession of civil wisdom; but he had then been disgusted, as well he might, by the inconceivable follies of the Restoration.

woolpacks. What is it but a servitude like that imposed by the Philistines, not to be allowed the sharpening of our own axes and coulters, but we must repair from all quarters to twenty licensing forges?

46. Had any one written and divulged erroneous things and scandalous to honest life, misusing and forfeiting the esteem had of his reason among men, if after conviction this only censure were adjudged him, that he should never henceforth write, but what were first examined by an appointed officer, whose hand should be annexed to pass his credit for him, that now he might be safely read; it could not be apprehended less than a disgraceful punishment. Whence to include the whole nation, and those that never yet thus offended, under such a diffident and suspectful prohibition, may plainly be understood what a disparagement it is. So much the more whenas debtors and delinquents may walk abroad without a keeper, but unoffensive books must not stir forth without a visible jailor in their title. Nor is it to the common people less than a reproach; for if we be so jealous over them, as that we dare not trust them with an English pamphlet, what do we but censure them for a giddy, vicious, and ungrounded people; in such a sick and weak state of faith and discretion, as to be able to take nothing down but through the pipe of a licenser? That this is care or love of them, we cannot pretend, whenas in those popish places, where the laity are most hated and despised, the same strictness is used over them. Wisdom we

is the old imagery of the
mind its jaws & windows hissing at.

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I cannot call it, because it stops but one breach of licensee, nor that neither: whenas those corruptions, which it seeks to prevent, break in faster at other doors, which cannot be shut.

47. And in conclusion it reflects to the disrepute of our ministers also, of whose labours we should hope better, and of their proficiency which their flock reaps by them, than that after all this light of the gospel which is, and is to be, and all this continual preaching, they should be still frequented with such an upprincipled, unedified, and laic rabble, as that the whiff of every new pamphlet should stagger them out of their catechism and Christian walking. This may have much reason to discourage the ministers, when such a low conceit is had of all their exhortations, and the benefiting of their hearers, as that they are not thought fit to be turned loose to three sheets of paper without a licenser; that all the sermons, all the lectures preached, printed, vended in such numbers, and such volumes, as have now well-nigh made all other books unsaleable, should not be armour enough against one single Enchiridion, without the castle of St. Angelo of an Imprimatur.

48. And lest some should persuade ye, lords and commons, that these arguments of learned men's discouragement at this your order are mere flourishes, and not real, I could recount what I have seen and heard in other countries, where this kind of inquisition tyrannizes; when I have sat among their learned men, (for that honour I had,) and been counted happy to be born in such a place of

philosophic freedom, as they supposed England was, while themselves did nothing but bemoan the servile condition into which learning amongst them was brought; that this was it which had damped the glory of Italian wits; that nothing had been there written now these many years but flattery and fustian. There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo, (46) grown old, a prisoner to the inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the franciscan and dominican licensers thought. And though I knew that England then was groaning loudest under the prelatical yoke, nevertheless I took it as a pledge of future happiness, that other nations were so persuaded of her liberty.

49. Yet was it beyond my hope, that those worthies were then breathing in her air, who should be her leaders to such a deliverance, as shall never be forgotten by any revolution of time that this world bath to finish. When that was once begun, it was as little in my fear, that what words of complaint I heard among learned men of other parts uttered against the inquisition, the same I should hear, by as learned men at home, uttered in time of parliament against an order of licensing; and that so generally, that when I had disclosed myself a companion of their discontent, I might say,

(46) This passage might have been expected to decide the question whether Galileo was in prison when Milton visited him; but, unfortunately, it throws not sufficient light upon the subject, though the construction of the sentence seems to favour the idea that he was still, when the poet saw him, a captive.

if without envy, that he whom an honest quæstorship had endeared to the Sicilians, was not more by them importuned against Verres, than the favourable opinion which I had among many who honour ye, and are known and respected by ye, loaded me with entreaties and persuasions, that I would not despair to lay together that which just reason should bring into my mind, toward the removal of an undeserved thraldom upon learning.

50. That this is not therefore the disburdening of a particular fancy, but the common grievance of all those who had prepared their minds and studies above the vulgar pitch, to advance truth in others, and from others to entertain it, thus much may satisfy. And in their name I shall for neither friend nor foe conceal what the general murmur is ; that if it come to inquisitioning again, and licensing, and that we are so timorous of ourselves, and suspicious of all men, as to fear each book, and the shaking of each leaf, before we know what the contents are ; if some who but of late were little better than silenced from preaching, shall come now to silence us from reading, except what they please, it cannot be guessed what is intended by some but a second tyranny over learning : and will soon put it out of controversy, that bishops and presbyters are the same to us, both name and thing.

51. That those evils of prelacy which before from five or six and twenty sees were distributively charged upon the whole people, will now light

wholly upon learning, is not obscure to us : whence now the pastor of a small unlearned parish, on the sudden shall be exalted archbishop over a large diocese of books, and yet not remove, but keep his other cure too, a mystical pluralist. He who but of late cried down the sole ordination of every novice bachelor of art, and denied sole jurisdiction over the simplest parishioner, shall now, at home in his private chair, assume both these over worthiest and excellentest books, and ablest authors that write them. This is not the covenants and protestations that we have made ! This is not to put down prelacy ; this is but to chop an episcopacy ; this is but to translate the palace metropolitan from one kind of dominion into another ; this is but an old canonical sleight of commuting our penance. To startle thus betimes at a mere unlicensed pamphlet, will, after a while, be afraid of every conventicle, and a while after will make a conventicle of every Christian meeting.

52. But I am certain, that a state governed by the rules of justice and fortitude, or a church built and founded upon the rock of faith and true knowledge, cannot be so pusillanimous. While things are yet not constituted in religion, that freedom of writing should be restrained by a discipline imitated from the prelates, and learned by them from the inquisition to shut us up all again into the breast of a licenser, must needs give cause of doubt and discouragement to all learned and religious men : who cannot but discern the fineness of this politic drift, and who are the contrivers ;

that while bishops were to be baited down, then all presses might be open; it was the people's birthright and privilege in time of parliament, it was the breaking forth of light.

53. But now the bishops abrogated and voided out of the church, as if our reformation sought no more, but to make room for others into their seats under another name; the episcopal arts begin to bud again; the cruise of truth must run no more oil; liberty of printing must be enthralled again, under a prelatical commission of twenty; the privilege of the people nullified; and, which is worse, the freedom of learning must groan again, and to her old fetters: all this the parliament yet sitting. Although their own late arguments and defences against the prelates might remember them, that this obstructing violence meets for the most part with an event utterly opposite to the end which it drives at: instead of suppressing sects and schisms, it raises them and invests them with a reputation: "the punishing of wits enhances their authority," saith the Viscount St. Albans; "and a forbidden writing is thought to be a certain spark of truth, that flies up in the faces of them who seek to tread it out." This order, therefore, may prove a nursing mother to sects, but I shall easily show how it will be a stepdame to truth: and first, by disenabling us to the maintenance of what is known already.

54. Well knows he who uses to consider, that our faith and knowledge thrives by exercise, as well as our limbs and complexion. Truth is compared in Scripture to a streaming fountain; if her

waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition. A man may be a heretic in the truth; and if he believe things only because his pastor says so, or the assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy.⁽⁴⁷⁾ There is not any burden, that some would gladder post off to another, than the charge and care of their religion. There be, who knows not that there be of Protestants and professors, who live and die in as errant and implicit faith, as any lay papist of Loretto.

55. A wealthy man, addicted to his pleasure and to his profits, finds religion to be a traffic so entangled, and of so many piddling accounts, that of all mysteries he cannot skill to keep a stock going upon that trade. What should he do? Fain he would have the name to be religious, fain he would bear up with his neighbours in that. What does he therefore, but resolves to give over toiling, and to find himself out some factor, to whose care and credit he may commit the whole

(47) In the same spirit Locke observes: "One may truly say, that there are very few lovers of truth for truth-sake, even amongst those who persuade themselves they are so. How a man may know whether he be so in earnest, is worth inquiry: and I think there is one unerring mark of it, viz. the not entertaining any proposition with greater assurance than the proofs it is built upon will warrant. Whoever goes beyond this measure of assent, it is plain, receives not truth in the love of it; loves not truth for truth-sake, but for some other by-end."—*(Essay on the Human Understanding, b. iv. ch. 19.)*

managing of his religious affairs; some divine of note and estimation that must be. To him he adheres, resigns the whole warehouse of his religion, with all the locks and keys, into his custody; and indeed makes the very person of that man his religion; esteems his associating with him a sufficient evidence and commendatory of his own piety. So that a man may say his religion is now no more within himself, but is become a divilual movable, and goes and comes near him, according as that good man frequents the house. He entertains him, gives him gifts, feasts him, lodges him; his religion comes home at night, prays, is liberally supped, and sumptuously laid to sleep; rises, is saluted, and after the malmsey, or some well-spiced bruage, and better breakfasted, than he whose morning appetite would have gladly fed on green figs between Bethany and Jerusalem, his religion walks abroad at eight, and leaves his kind entertainer in the shop trading all day without his religion.

56. Another sort there be, who when they hear that all things shall be ordered, all things regulated and settled; nothing written but what passes through the custom-house of certain publicans that have the tonnaging and poundaging of all free-spoken truth; will straight give themselves up into your hands, make them and cut them out what religion ye please: there be delights, there be recreations and jolly pastimes, that will fetch the day about from sun to sun, and rock the tedious year as in a delightful dream. What need they

torture their heads with that which others have
taken so strictly, and so unalterably into their own
purveying? These are the fruits, which a dull
ease and cessation of our knowledge will bring
forth among the people. How goodly, and how
to be wished were such an obedient unanimity as
this! What a fine conformity would it starch us
all into! Doubtless a staunch and solid piece of
framework, as any January could freeze together.

57. Nor much better will be the consequence
even among the clergy themselves: it is no new
thing never heard of before, for a parochial minis-
ter, who has his reward, and is at his Hercules'
pillars in a warm benefice, to be easily inclinable,
if he have nothing else that may rouse up his
studies, to finish his circuit in an English Con-
cordance and a topic folio, the gatherings and
savings of a sober graduateship, a Harmony and
a Catena, treading the constant round of certain
common doctrinal heads, attended with their uses,
motives, marks, and means; out of which, as out
of an alphabet or sol fa, by forming and trans-
forming, joining and disjoining variously, a little
bookcraft, and two hours' meditation, might fur-
nish him unspeakably to the performance of more
than a weekly charge of sermoning: not to reckon
up the infinite helps of interliniaries, breviaries,
synopses, and other loitering gear.⁽⁴⁸⁾ But as for

(48) In a curious old book, entitled "Microcosmographie, or
a Piece of the World discovered," we have the following picture
of what the author terms "a young raw preacher," who, he says,
"is a bird not yet fledged, that hath hopped out of his nest to be

the multitude of sermons ready printed and piled up, on every text that is not difficult, our London trading St. Thomas in his vestry, and add to boot St. Martin and St. Hugh, have not within their hallowed limits more vendible ware of all sorts ready made: so that penury he never need fear of pulpit provision, having where so plenteously to refresh his magazine. But if his rear and flanks be not impaled, if his back door be not secured by the rigid licenser, but that a bold book may now and then issue forth, and give the assault to some of his old collections in their trenches, it will concern him then to keep waking, to stand in watch, to set good guards and sentinels about his received opinions, to walk the round and counter-round with his fellow-inspectors, fearing lest any of his flock

chirping on a hedge, and will be straggling abroad at what peril soever. His backwardness in the university hath set him thus forward; for had he not truanted there, he had not been so hasty a divine. His small standing and time hath made him a proficient only in boldness, out of which, and his table-book, he is furnished for a preacher. His collections of study are the notes of sermons, which, taken up at St. Mary's, he utters in the country. And if he write Brachigraphy, his stock is so much the better. His writing is more than his reading; for he reads only what he gets without book. Thus accomplished, he comes down to his friends, and his first salutation is grace and peace out of the pulpit. His prayer is conceited, and no man remembers his college more at large. The pace of his sermon is a full career, and he runs wildly over hill and dale until the clock stop him. The labours of it is chiefly in his lungs; and the only thing he has made of it himself is the faces. He takes on against the Pope without mercy, and has a jest still in lavender for Bellarmine. His action is all passion, and his speech interjections: he has an excellent faculty in bemoaning the people, and spits

be seduced, who also then would be better instructed, better exercised, and disciplined. And God send that the fear of this diligence, which must then be used, do not make us affect the laziness of a licensing church !

58. For if we be sure we are in the right, and do not hold the truth guiltily, which becomes not, if we ourselves condemn not our own weak and frivolous teaching, and the people for an untaught and irreligious gadding rout; what can be more fair, than when a man judicious, learned, and of a conscience, for aught we know, as good as theirs that taught us what we know, shall not privily from house to house, which is more dangerous, but openly by writing, publish to the world what his opinion is, what his reasons, and wherefore that

with a very good grace. He will not draw his handkerchief out of its place, nor blow his nose without discretion. His commendation is, that he never looks upon book, and indeed he was never used to it. He preaches but once a year, though twice on Sunday : for the stuff is still the same, only the dressing a little altered. He has more tricks with a sermon, than a tailor with an old cloak, to turn it, and piece it, and at last quite disguise it with a new preface. If he has waded further in his profession, and would show reading of his own, his authors are postils, and his school divinity a catechism. His fashion and demure habit get him in with some town-precisian, and make him a guest on Friday nights. You shall know him by his narrow velvet cape, and serge facing, and his ruff, next his hair, the shortest thing about him. The companion of his walks is some zealous tradesman, whom he astonisheth with strange points, which they both understand alike. His friends, and much painfulness, may prefer him to thirty pounds a year ; and this means, to a chamber-maid : with whom we leave him now in the bonds of wedlock. Next Sunday you shall have him again."

which is now thought cannot be sound ? Christ urged it as wherewith to justify himself, that he preached in public ; yet writing is more public than preaching ; and more easy to refutation if need be, there being so many whose business and profession merely it is to be the champions of truth ; which if they neglect, what can be imputed but their sloth or inability ?

59. Thus much we are hindered and disinured by this course of licensing towards the true knowledge of what we seem to know. For how much it hurts and hinders the licensers themselves in the calling of their ministry, more than any secular employment, if they will discharge that office as they ought, so that of necessity they must neglect either the one duty or the other, I insist not, because it is a particular, but leave it to their own conscience, how they will decide it there.

60. There is yet behind of what I purposed to lay open, the incredible loss and detriment that this plot of licensing puts us to, more than if some enemy at sea should stop up all our havens, and ports, and creeks ; it hinders and retards the importation of our richest merchandise,—truth : nay, it was first established and put in practice by anti-christian malice and mystery, on set purpose to extinguish, if it were possible, the light of reformation, and to settle falsehood ; little differing from that policy wherewith the Turk upholds his Alcoran, by the prohibiting of printing. (49) It is

(49) We have lived to witness a change even in the Turkish

not denied, but gladly confessed, we are to send our thanks and vows to heaven, louder than most of nations, for that great measure of truth which we enjoy, especially in those main points between us and the pope, with his appurtenances the prelates: but he who thinks we are to pitch our tent here, and have attained the utmost prospect of reformation, that the mortal glass wherein we contemplate can show us, till we come to beatific vision; that man by this very opinion declares, that he is yet far short of truth.

61. Truth indeed came once into the world with her divine master, and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on: but when he ascended, and his apostles after him were laid asleep, then straight arose a wicked race of deceivers, who, as that story goes of the Egyptian Typhon with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osiris, took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. (⁵⁰) From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth,

policy on this question. Abdoul Hamid sought to derive from the press a powerful means of civilizing his subjects; but was defeated by bigotry. Mahmood has pursued the same policy with better success; and we have ourselves beheld with pleasure this great palladium of knowledge at work within the palace of a Turkish prince. It was not merely in support of their religion, however, that the more ancient sultans prohibited the introduction of printing: “*Le Grand Turc s'est bien avise de cela-que les livres et la doctrine donnent plus que toute autre chose, aux hommes, le sens de se reconnoître, et de haïr la tyrannie.*”—(*La Beotie, Discours sur la Servitude Volontaire.*)

(⁵⁰) On this curious fable, see Plutarch's Treatise on Isis and Osiris.

such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris, went up and down gathering up limb by limb still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, lords and commons, nor ever shall do, till her master's second coming; he shall bring together every joint and member, and shall mould them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection. Suffer not these licensing prohibitions to stand at every place of opportunity forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking, that continue to do our obsequies to the torn body of our martyred saint.

62. We boast our light; but if we look not wisely on the sun itself, it smites us into darkness. Who can discern those planets that are oft combust, and those stars of brightest magnitude, that rise and set with the sun, until the opposite motion of their orbs bring them to such a place in the firmament, where they may be seen evening or morning? The light which we have gained, was given us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge. It is not the unfrocking of a priest, the unmitring of a bishop, and the removing him from off the presbyterian shoulders, that will make us a happy nation: no, if other things as great in the church, and in the rule of life both economical and political, be not looked into and reformed, we have looked so long upon the blaze that Zuinglius and Calvin have beaconed up to us, that we are stark blind.

63. There be who perpetually complain of schisms and sects, and make it such a calamity that any man dissents from their maxims. It is their own pride and ignorance which causes the disturbing, who neither will hear with meekness, nor can convince, yet all must be suppressed which is not found in their Syntagma. They are the troublers, they are the dividers of unity, who neglect and permit not others to unite those dissevered pieces, which are yet wanting to the body of truth. To be still searching what we know not, by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it, (for all her body is homogeneal, and proportional,) this is the golden rule in theology as well as in arithmetic, and makes up the best harmony in a church; not the forced and outward union of cold, and neutral, and inwardly divided minds.

64. Lords and commons of England! consider what nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governors: a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit; acute to invent, subtile and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. Therefore the studies of learning in her deepest sciences have been so ancient, and so eminent among us, that writers of good antiquity and able judgment have been persuaded, that even the school of Pythagoras, and the Persian wisdom, took beginning from the old philosophy of this island. (⁵¹) And that wise and

(⁵¹) This is rhetorical, though no doubt the Druids may have

civil Roman, Julius Agricola, who governed once here for Cæsar, preferred the natural wits of Britain, before the laboured studies of the French. (52)

65. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal Transylvanian sends out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia, and beyond the Hercynian wilderness, not their youth, but their staid men, to learn our language and our theological arts. Yet that which is above all this, the favour and the love of Heaven, we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner propitious and propending towards us. Why else was this nation chosen before any other, that out of her, as out of Sion, should be proclaimed and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of reformation to all Europe? And had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the divine and admirable spirit of Wickliffe, to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Husse and Jerome, no nor the name of Luther or of Calvin, had been ever known: the glory of reforming all our neighbours had been completely ours. But now, as our obdurate clergy have with violence demeaned the matter, we are become hitherto the latest and the backwardest

been as wise as the Persians. Pythagoras, however, had deeper and purer springs to draw from than the barbarian philosophy of Britain: his own genius and his own country freed him from the necessity of travelling so far northward in search of wisdom.

(52) *Jam verò principum filios liberalibus artibus erudire, et ingenia Britannorum studiis Gallorum anteferre, ut qui modò lingam Romanam abnuebant, eloquentiam concupiscerent.* — *Tacit. Agricol. xxi.*

scholars, of whom God offered to have made us the teachers.

66. Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his church, even to the reforming of reformation itself; what does he then but reveal himself to his servants, and as his manner is, first to his Englishmen? I say as his manner is, first to us, though we mark not the method of his counsels, and are unworthy. Behold now this vast city: a city of refuge, the mansion-house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers working, to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleagured truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation: others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement.

67. What could a man require more from a nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge? What wants there to such aowardly and pregnant soil, but wise and faithful labourers, to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies? We reckon more than five months yet to harvest; there need not be five weeks, had we but eyes to lift up, the fields are

white already. Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism, we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding, which God hath stirred up in this city. What some lament of, we rather should rejoice at, should rather praise this pious forwardness among men, to reassume the ill-deputed care of their religion into their own hands again. A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity might win all these diligencies to join and unite into one general and brotherly search after truth; could we but forego this prelatical tradition of crowding free consciences and Christian liberties into canons and precepts of men. I doubt not, if some great and worthy stranger should come among us, wise to discern the mould and temper of a people, and how to govern it, observing the high hopes and aims, the diligent alacrity of our extended thoughts and reasonings in the pursuance of truth and freedom, but that he would cry out as Pyrrhus did, admiring the Roman docility and courage; If such were my Epirots, I would not despair the greatest design that could be attempted to make a church or kingdom happy.

68. Yet these are the men cried out against for schismatics and sectaries, as if, while the temple of the Lord was building, some cutting, some squaring the marble, others hewing the cedars,

there should be a sort of irrational men, who could not consider there must be many schisms and many dissections made in the quarry and in the timber, ere the house of God can be built. And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world: neither can every piece of the building be of one form; nay rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderate varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportional, arises the goodly and the graceful symmetry that commends the whole pile and structure.

69. Let us therefore be more considerate builders, more wise in spiritual architecture, when great reformation is expected. For now the time seems come, wherein Moses, the great prophet, may sit in heaven rejoicing to see that memorable and glorious wish of his fulfilled, when not only our seventy elders, but all the Lord's people, are become prophets. No marvel then though some men, and some good men too perhaps, but young in goodness, as Joshua then was, envy them. They fret, and out of their own weakness are in agony, lest these divisions and subdivisions will undo us. The adversary again applauds, and waits the hour: when they have branched themselves out, saith he, small enough into parties and partitions, then will be our time. Fool! he sees not the firm root, out of which we all grow, though into branches; nor will beware, until he see our small divided maniples cutting through at every angle of his ill-united

and unwieldly brigade. And that we are to hope better of all these supposed sects and schisms, and that we shall not need that solicitude, honest perhaps, though overtimorous, of them that vex in this behalf, but shall laugh in the end at those malicious applauders of our differences, I have these reasons to persuade me.

70. First, when a city shall be as it were besieged and blocked about, her navigable river infested, inroads and incursions round, defiance and battle oft rumoured to be marching up, even to her walls and suburb trenches; that then the people, or the greater part, more than at other times, wholly taken up with the study of highest and most important matters to be reformed, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing, even to a rarity and admiration, things not before discoursed or written of, argues first a singular good will, contentedness, and confidence in your prudent foresight, and safe government, lords and commons; and from thence derives itself to a gallant bravery and well grounded contempt of their enemies, as if there were no small number of as great spirits among us, as his was who, when Rome was nigh besieged by Hannibal, being in the city, bought that piece of ground at no cheap rate, whereon Hannibal himself encamped his own regiment.

71. Next, it is a lively and cheerful presage of our happy success and victory. For as in a body when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous, not only to vital, but to rational faculties, and

those in the acutest and the pertest operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is; so when the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention, it betokens us not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, by casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption to outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages. Methinks I see in my mind/a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

72. What should ye do then, should ye suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light sprung up and yet springing daily in this city? Should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers over it, to bring a famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel? Believe it, lords and

commons! they who counsel ye to such a suppressing, do as good as bid ye suppress yourselves; and I will soon show how. If it be desired to know the immediate cause of all this free writing and free speaking, there cannot be assigned a truer than your own mild, and free, and humane government; it is the liberty, lords and commons, which your own valorous and happy counsels have purchased us; liberty which is the nurse of all great wits: this is that which hath rarified and enlightened our spirits like the influence of heaven; this is that which hath enfranchised, enlarged, and lifted up our apprehensions degrees above themselves. Ye cannot make us now less capable, less knowing, less eagerly pursuing of the truth, unless ye first make yourselves, that made us so, less the lovers, less the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant again, brutish, formal, and slavish, as ye found us; but you then must first become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary, and tyrannous, as they were from whom ye have freed us. That our hearts are now more capacious, our thoughts more erected to the search and expectation of greatest and exactest things, is the issue of your own virtue propagated in us; ye cannot suppress that, unless ye reinforce an abrogated and merciless law, that fathers may dispatch at will their own children. And who shall then stick closest to ye and excite others? Not he who takes up arms for coat and conduct, and his four nobles of Danegelt. Although I dispraise not the defence of just immunities, yet love my peace

better, if that were all. Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

73. What would be best advised then, if it be found so hurtful and so unequal to suppress opinions for the newness or the unsuitableness to a customary acceptance, will not be my task to say ; I shall only repeat what I have learned from one of your own honourable number, a right noble and pious lord, who had he not sacrificed his life and fortunes to the church and commonwealth, we had not now missed and bewailed a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument. Ye know him, I am sure ; yet I for honour's sake, and may it be eternal to him, shall name him, the Lord Brook. He writing of episcopacy, and by the way treating of sects and schisms, left ye his vote, or rather now the last words of his dying charge, which I know will ever be of dear and honoured regard with ye, so full of meekness and breathing charity, that next to his last testament, who bequeathed love and peace to his disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild and peaceful. He there exhorts us to hear with patience and humility those, however they be mis-called, that desire to live purely, in such a use of God's ordinances, as the best guidance of their conscience gives them, and to tolerate them, though in some disconformity to ourselves. The book itself will tell us more at large, being published to the world, and dedicated to the parliament by him, who both for his life and for his death deserves,

that what advice he left be not laid by without perusal.

74. And now the time in special is, by privilege to write and speak what may help to the further discussing of matters in agitation. The temple of Janus, with his two controversial faces, might now not unsignificantly be set open. And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple; who ever knew truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter? Her confuting is the best and surest suppressing. He who hears what praying there is for light and clear knowledge to be sent down among us, would think of other matters to be constituted beyond the discipline of Geneva, framed and fabricked already to our hands.

75. Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose, if it come not first in at their casements. What a collusion is this, whenas we are exhorted by the wise man to use diligence, "to seek for wisdom as for hidden treasures," early and late, that another order shall enjoin us, to know nothing but by statute? When a man hath been labouring the hardest labour in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnished out his findings in all their equipage, drawn forth his reasons as it were a battle ranged, scattered and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun, if he

please, only that he may try the matter by dint of argument; for his opponents then to sculk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing where the challenger should pass, though it be valour enough in soldiership, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of truth. / For who knows not that truth is strong, next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious, those are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power: give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old Proteus did, who spake oracles only when he was caught and bound, but then rather she turns herself into all shapes except her own, and perhaps tunes her voice according to the time, as Micaiah did before Ahab, until she be adjured into her own likeness.

76. Yet is it not impossible that she may have more shapes than one? What else is all that rank of things indifferent, wherein truth may be on this side, or on the other, without being unlike herself? What but a vain shadow else is the abolition of “those ordinances, that hand-writing nailed to the cross?” What great purchase is this Christian liberty which Paul so often boasts of? His doctrine is, that he who eats or eats not, regards a day or regards it not, may do either to the Lord. How many other things might be tolerated in peace, and left to conscience, had we but charity, and were it not the chief strong hold of our hypocrisy to be ever judging one another? I fear yet

this iron yoke of outward conformity hath left a slavish print upon our necks; the ghost of a linen decency yet haunts us. We stumble, and are impatient at the least dividing of one visible congregation from another, though it be not in fundamentals; and through our forwardness to suppress, and our backwardness to recover, any enthralled piece of truth out of the gripe of custom, we care not to keep truth separated from truth, which is the fiercest rent and disunion of all. We do not see that while we still affect by all means a rigid external formality, we may as soon fall again into a gross conforming stupidity, a stark and dead congealment of "wood and hay and stubble" forced and frozen together, which is more to the sudden degenerating of a church than many subdichotomies of petty schisms.

77. Not that I can think well of every light separation; or that all in a church is to be expected "gold and silver and precious stones:" it is not possible for man to sever the wheat from the tares, the good fish from the other fry; that must be the angels' ministry at the end of mortal things. Yet if all cannot be of one mind, as who looks they should be? this doubtless is more wholesome, more prudent, and more Christian, that many be tolerated rather than all compelled. I mean not tolerated popery, and open superstition, which as it extirpates all religions and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpate, provided first that all charitable and compassionate means be used to win and regain the weak and the misled: that also

which is impious or evil absolutely either against faith or manners, no law can possibly permit, that intends not to unlaw itself: but those neighbouring differences, or rather indifferences, are what I speak of, whether in some point of doctrine or of discipline, which though they may be many, yet need not interrupt the unity of spirit, if we could but find among us the bond of peace.

78. In the meanwhile, if any one would write, and bring his helpful hand to the slow moving reformation which we labour under, if truth have spoken to him before others, or but seemed at least to speak, who hath so bejesuited us, that we should trouble that man with asking licence to do so worthy a deed; and not consider this, that if it come to prohibiting, there is not aught more likely to be prohibited than truth itself: whose first appearance to our eyes, bleared and dimmed with prejudice and custom, is more unsightly and unpleasing than many errors; even as the person is of many a great man slight and contemptible to see to. And what do they tell us vainly of new opinions, when this very opinion of theirs, that none must be heard but whom they like, is the worst and newest opinion of all others; and is the chief cause why sects and schisms do so much abound, and true knowledge is kept at distance from us; besides yet a greater danger which is in it. For when God shakes a kingdom, with strong and healthful commotions, to a general reforming, it is not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing.

79. But yet more true it is, that God then raises to his own work men of rare abilities, and more than common industry, not only to look back and revise what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further, and to go on some new enlightened steps in the discovery of truth. For such is the order of God's enlightening his church, to dispense and deal out by degrees his beam, so as our earthly eyes may best sustain it. Neither is God appointed and confined, where and out of what place these his chosen shall be first heard to speak; for he sees not as man sees, chooses not as man chooses, lest we should devote ourselves again to set places and assemblies, and outward callings of men; planting our faith one while in the old convocation house, and another while in the chapel at Westminster; when all the faith and religion that shall be there canonized, is not sufficient without plain conviction, and the charity of patient instruction, to supple the least bruise of conscience, to edify the meanest Christian, who desires to walk in the spirit, and not in the letter of human trust, for all the number of voices that can be there made; no, though Harry the Seventh himself there, with all his liege tombs about him, should lend them voices from the dead to swell their number.

80. And if the men be erroneous who appear to be the leading schismatics, what withholds us but our sloth, our self-will, and distrust in the right cause, that we do not give them gentle meetings and gentle dismissions, that we debate not and

- more urgently

examine the matter thoroughly with liberal and frequent audience; if not for their sakes yet for our own? Seeing no man who hath tasted learning, but will confess the many ways of profiting by those who, not contented with stale receipts, are able to manage and set forth new positions to the world. And were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long as in that notion they may yet serve to polish and brighten the armory of truth, even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away. But if they be of those whom God hath fitted for the special use of these times with eminent and ample gifts, and those perhaps neither among the priests, nor among the Pharisees, and we, in the haste of a precipitant zeal, shall make no distinction, but resolve to stop their mouths, because we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly fore-judge them ere we understand them; no less than woe to us, while, thinking thus to defend the gospel, we are found the persecutors!

81. There have been not a few since the beginning of this parliament, both of the presbytery and others, who by their unlicensed books to the contempt of an imprimatur first broke that triple ice clung about our hearts, and taught the people to see day: I hope that none of those were the persuaders to renew upon us this bondage, which they themselves have wrought so much good by contemning. But if neither the check that Moses gave to young Joshua, nor the countermind which our Saviour gave to young John, who was so ready

to prohibit those whom he thought unlicensed, be not enough to admonish our elders how unacceptable to God their testy mood of prohibiting is; if neither their own remembrance what evil hath abounded in the church by this lett of licensing, and what good they themselves have begun by transgressing it, be not enough, but that they will persuade and execute the most Dominican part of the inquisition over us, and are already with one foot in the stirrup so active at suppressing, it would be no unequal distribution in the first place to suppress the suppressors themselves; whom the change of their condition hath puffed up, more than their late experience of harder times hath made wise.

82. And as for regulating the press, let no man think to have the honour of advising ye better than yourselves have done in that order published next before this, "That no book be printed, unless the printer's and the author's name, or at least the printer's be registered." Those which otherwise come forth, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectual remedy that man's prevention can use. For this authentic Spanish policy of licensing books, if I have said aught, will prove the most unlicensed book itself within a short while; and was the immediate image of a star-chamber decree to that purpose made in those times when that court did the rest of those her pious works, for which she is now fallen from the stars with Lucifer. Wherby ye may guess what

kind of state prudence, what love of the people, what care of religion or good manners there was at the contriving, although with singular hypocrisy it pretended to bind books to their good behaviour. And how it got the upper hand of your preeedent order so well constituted before, if we may believe those men whose profession gives them cause to inquire most, it may be doubted there was in it the fraud of some old patentees and monopolizers, in the trade of bookselling ; who, under pretence of the poor in their company not to be defrauded, and the just retaining of each man his several copy, (which God forbid should be gain-said,) brought divers glossing colours to the house, which were indeed but colours, and serving to no end except it be to exercise a superiority over their neighbours ; men who do not therefore labour in an honest profession, to which learning is indebted, that they should be made other men's vas-sals. Another end is thought was aimed at by some of them in procuring by petition this order, that having power in their hands, malignant books might the easier escape abroad, as the event shows. But of these sophisms and elenchs of merchandize I skill not : this I know, that errors in a good go-vernment and in a bad are equally almost inci-dent ; for what magistrate may not be misin-formed, and much the sooner, if liberty of printing be reduced into the power of a few ? But to redress willingly and speedily what hath been erred, and in highest authority to esteem a plain advertise-ment more than others have done a sumptuous bride,

is a virtue (honoured lords and commons!) answerable to your highest actions, and whereof none can participate but greatest and wisest men. (53)

(53) Dr. Birch observes that the Areopagitica had not the proper effect on the Presbyterians, who had, at that time, the ascendant, and were as tenacious of continuing the restraints upon others, as they had been loud in their complaints of them, when imposed upon themselves. According to Toland, however, (*Life of Milton*, p. 23.) the effect of the speech was such, that even one of the licensers themselves, called Mabbot, having assigned his reasons, retired from the office, in 1645. But this, it appears from Whitelocke, (*Memorials, &c.* p. 403., *Lond. 1732.*) is erroneous: for Mabbot did not retire till May 22, 1649: when, upon his desire and reasonings against licensing of books to be printed, he was discharged of that employment. And we find a particular account of the affair in a weekly paper, in quarto, entitled, *A perfect diurnal of some passages in Parliament, and the daily proceedings of the army, under his excellency the Lord Fairfax, from May 21 to May 28, 1649*, No. 304, where, p. 2531, we read as follows: "Mr. Mabbot hath long desired several members of the house, and lately the council of state, to move the house that he might be discharged of licensing books for the future, for the reasons following: viz. Because many thousands of scandalous and malignant pamphlets have been published with his name thereunto, as if he had licensed the same, (though he never saw them) on purpose (as he conceives) to prejudice him in his reputation amongst the honest party of this nation. II. Because that employment (he conceives) is unjust and illegal, as to the ends of its first institution, viz. to stop the press from publishing any thing that might discover the corruption of Church and State, in the time of popery, episcopacy, and tyranny; the better to keep the people in ignorance, and carry on their popish, factious, and tyrannical designs, for the enslaving and destruction both of the bodies and souls of all the free people of this nation. III. Because licensing is as great a monopoly as ever was in this nation, in that all men's judgments, reasons, &c. are to be bound up in the licenser's, (as to licensing); for if the author of any sheet, book, or treatise, write not to please the fancy, and come within the com-

pass of the licenser's judgment, then he is not to receive any stamp of authority for publishing thereof. IV. Because it is lawful (in his judgment) to print any book, sheet, &c. without licensing, so as the author and printers do subscribe their true names thereunto, that so they may be liable to answer the contents thereof; and if they offend therein, then to be punished by such laws as are or shall be for those cases provided. A committee of the Council of State being satisfied with these and other reasons of Mr. Mabbott concerning licensing, the Council of State reports to the house: upon which, the house ordered this day that the said Mr. Mabbott be discharged of licensing books for the future."

THE
TENURE OF KINGS
AND
MAGISTRATES.

SOON after the march of Fairfax and Cromwell, with the whole army through the city, in April, 1647, to suppress the insurrection of Brown and Massey, Milton removed to Holborn, where he continued until after the King's death; when, the form of the government being changed to a republic, and the Presbyterians, then out of power, declarring their abhorrence of the Stuart's execution, Milton undertook, in the following treatise, to maintain the right of nations to put a tyrant to death. Wood rightly supposes it was written before the execution of Charles I., though it now contains many passages afterwards inserted;* but Milton himself assures us it was not published until the transaction had taken place; and even then more with a design to compose the publice mind, and reconcile to the existing government such as were disaffected, than to determine any thing respecting the late king. From a MS. note found in a printed copy in his possession, Dr. Bireh discovered that the work was published in the month of February, 1648-9.† It should be remembered that even in his "*Defence of the People of England*," when there existed no reasons for suppressing or disguising his sentiments, Milton never exhibited any hatred of just and lawful princes; and here, in advocating tyrannieide, takes the greatest care to distinguish between the king and the tyrant. His opinions, in fact, were those of Buchanan, ("*De Jure Regni apud Scotos*,") from whom Dryden absurdly accuses him of stealing the whole "*Defence of the People of England*";‡ and upon the Revolution of 1688, Locke maintained, with the approbation of King William III., precisely the same proposition. This the reader should constantly bear in mind, as well as that he wrote in a Commonwealth, at a time when the opinions of most learned men were unfavourable to monarchy.

* In the second edition, in 1650; for his works had then a rapid sale.

† Life of Milton, prefixed to the 4to. edition of the Prose Works, p. xxxii.

‡ Preface to the "*Medal*," which he entitles "*An Epistle to the Whigs*."

TENURE OF KINGS.

1. If men within themselves would be governed by reason, and not generally give up their understanding to a double tyranny, of custom from without, and blind affections within, they would discern better what it is to favour and uphold the tyrant of a nation. But being slaves within doors, no wonder that they strive so much to have the public state conformably governed to the inward vicious rule, by which they govern themselves. For indeed none can love freedom heartily, but good men: the rest love not freedom, but licence; which never hath more scope, or more indulgence than under tyrants. Hence is it that tyrants are not oft offended, nor stand much in doubt of bad men, as being all naturally servile; but in whom virtue and true worth most is eminent, them they fear in earnest, as by right their masters; against them lies all their hatred and suspicion. Consequently neither do bad men hate tyrants, but have been always readiest, with the falsified names of loyalty and obedience, to colour over their base compliances.

2. And although sometimes for shame, and when it comes to their own grievances, of purse

especially, they would seem good patriots, and side with the better cause, yet when others for the deliverance of their country endued with fortitude and heroic virtue, to fear nothing but the curse written against those “that do the work of the Lord negligently,” would go on to remove, not only the calamities and thraldoms of a people, but the roots and causes whence they spring; straight these men, and sure helpers at need, as if they hated only the miseries, but not the mischiefs, after they have juggled and paltered with the world, bandied and borne arms against their king, divested him, disanointed him, nay, cursed him all over in their pulpits, (¹) and their pamphlets, to the engaging of sincere and real men beyond what is possible or honest to retreat from, not only turn revolters from those principles, which only could at first move them, but lay the strain of disloyalty, and worse, on those proceedings, which are the necessary consequences of their own former actions; nor disliked by themselves, were they managed to the entire advantages of their own faction;

(¹) Dr. Zachary Grey, the learned, but partial and prejudiced editor of Hudibras, has, with the diligence of one who performs a labour of love, scraped together in his notes every thing the paltry literature of the Restoration could supply against the preachers and soldiers of the Commonwealth. He, however, corroborates Milton's charge against the Presbyterians, of having at the outset preached a crusade against royalty; but is far from joining with the poet in reprehending their backwardness to “fight it out, *mordicus*, to death.” “The Presbyterians (many of whom, before the war, had got, he observes, into parish churches) preached the people into rebellion; incited them to take up arms and fight the Lord's battles, and destroy the Amalekites, root and branch, hip and thigh, and to root out the wicked from the earth; that

not considering the while that he, toward whom they boasted their new fidelity, counted them accessory ; and by those statutes and laws, which they so impotently brandish against others, would have doomed them to a traitor's death for what they have done already.

3. It is true, that most men are apt enough to civil wars and commotions as a novelty, and for a flash hot and active ; but through sloth or inconstancy, and weakness of spirit, either fainting ere their own pretences, though never so just, be half attained, or through an inbred falsehood and wickedness, betray, oftentimes to destruction with themselves, men of noblest temper joined with them for causes, whereof they in their rash undertakings were not capable. If God and a good cause give them victory, the prosecution whereof for the most part inevitably draws after it the alteration of laws, change of government, downfall of princes with their families ; then comes the task to those worthies, which are the soul of that enterprise, to be sweat and laboured out amidst the throng and

was, in their sense, all that loved the king, the bishops, and the common prayer." "It has been fully made out, that many of the regicides were drawn into the grand rebellion by the direful imprecations of seditious preachers from the pulpit." Dr. South relates that "he had it from the mouth of Axtell the regicide, that he, with many more, went into that execrable war, with such a controlling horror upon their spirits, from those public sermons, especially of Brooks and Calamy, that they verily believed they should have been accursed of God for ever, if they had not acted their part in the dismali tragedy, and heartily done the devil's work."—(*Sermons*, i. 513.) He adds, that "it was the pulpit that supplied the field with swordsmen, and the parliament house with incendiaries."

noses of vulgar and irrational men. Some contesting for privileges, customs, forms, and that old entanglement of iniquity, their gibberish laws, (2) though the badge of their ancient slavery. Others, who have been fiercest against their prince, under the notion of a tyrant, and no mean incendiaries of the war against them, when God, out of his providence and high disposal hath delivered him into the hand of their brethren, on a sudden and in a new garb of allegiance, which their doings have long since cancelled, they plead for him, pity him, extol him, protest against those that talk of bringing him to the trial of justice, (3) which is the sword of God, superior to all mortal things, in whose hand soever by apparent signs his testified will is to put it.

(2) To those who would see a thorough exposure of the absurdity of this "gibberish," we recommend Arthur Symonds's "Mechanics of Law-making," a work of much merit, and little pretensions, which should be the *vade mecum* of members of Parliament, committee-men, and the readers of parliamentary debates.

(3) From this passage it is clear that, though the work was not published until after the execution of Charles, it was written previously, to fortify the resolution, perhaps, of the more hesitating and faint-hearted among the tyrannicides, who, to keep them steady to their purpose, may have stood in need of being supported by texts of Scripture. Sir Egerton Brydges, an ardent and an enlightened admirer of Milton, is exceedingly scandalized at the doctrine maintained in this treatise : "the very title," he says, "is surely in the highest degree objectionable, and does not, *in these days*, require any refutation. To say the truth, this is a part of Milton's character which puzzles me—and no other. This bloodthirstiness does not agree with his sanctity, and other mental and moral qualities," &c. (*Life*, p. 108.) From this it is evident, that in professing not to comprehend

4. But certainly, if we consider who and what they are, on a sudden grown so pitiful, we may conclude their pity can be no true and Christian commiseration, but either levity and shallowness of mind, or else a carnal admiring of that worldly pomp and greatness, from whence they see him fallen ; or rather, lastly, a dissembled and seditious pity, feigned of industry to beget new discord. As for mercy, if it be to a tyrant, under which name they themselves have cited him so oft in the hearing of God, of angels, and the holy church assembled, and there charged him with the spilling of more innocent blood by far than ever Nero did, undoubtedly the mercy which they pretend is the mercy of wicked men ; and “ their mercies,” we read, “ are cruelties ;” hazarding the welfare of a whole nation, to have saved one whom they so oft

this point of the poet’s character he is guilty of no hypocrisy : for, most certainly, nothing could be further from Milton’s soul than the brutal thirst of blood here attributed to him, which would have brought down his noble nature to a level with the Murats and Robespierres of the past age. On the contrary, it was his horror for blood, his humane impatience at beholding it shed like water, in civil wars, his dread of seeing re-established a tyranny by which the value of man’s life was not properly recognized, that caused him to desire the interference of the “ sword of God,” to restore peace and freedom to these distracted kingdoms. He was in all things an enthusiast. Had the firm establishment of liberty required the sacrifice, we are fully persuaded there were moments in his glorious career in which he who willingly encountered blindness for the commonwealth would, with equal ardour, have encountered death. It was under the influence of these stern principles that he called for, and justified the execution of Charles ; not from any fierce or malignant wish to destroy the man who for so many years had wielded the supreme authority in England.

have termed Agag, and vilifying the blood of many Jonathans that have saved Israel; insisting with much niceness on the unnecessary clause of their covenant wrested, wherein the fear of change and the absurd contradiction of a flattering hostility had hampered them, but not scrupling to give away for compliments, to an implacable revenge, the heads of many thousand Christians more.

5. Another sort there is, who coming in the course of these affairs, to have their share in great actions above the form of law or custom, at least to give their voice and approbation; begin to swerve and almost shiver at the majesty and grandeur of some noble deed, as if they were newly entered into a great sin; disputing precedents, forms, and circumstances, when the commonwealth nigh perishes for want of deeds in substance, done with just and faithful expedition. To these I wish better instruction, and virtue equal to their calling; the former of which, that is to say, instruction, I shall endeavour, as my duty is, to bestow on them; and exhort them not to startle from the just and pious resolution of adhering, with all their strength and assistance, to the present parliament and army, in the glorious way wherein justice and victory hath set them; the only warrants through all ages, next under immediate revelation, to exercise supreme power; in those proceedings, which hitherto appear equal to what hath been done in any age or nation heretofore justly or magnanimously.

6. Nor let them be discouraged or deterred by any new apostate scarecrows, who, under show of giving counsel, send out their barking monitories

and mementoes, empty of aught else but the spleen of a frustrated faction. For how can that pretended counsel be either sound or faithful, when they that give it see not, for madness and vexation of their ends lost, that those statutes and scriptures, which both falsely and scandalously they wrest against their friends and associates, would, by sentence of the common adversary, fall first and heaviest upon their own heads? (*) Neither let mild and tender dispositions be foolishly softened from their duty and perseverance with the unmasculine rhetoric of any puling priest or chaplain, sent as a friendly letter of advice, for fashion's sake in private, and forthwith published by the sender himself, that we may know how much of

(*) On the conduct of the Presbyterians, Dr. Symmons, himself belonging to the movement party in politics, makes the following pertinent remarks: "In the course of this work the Presbyterians obtain much of the author's notice; and their conduct is exposed by him with the severity it deserved. It was difficult indeed to animadvert too strongly upon the inconsistency of men who, after resisting the authority of their sovereign, after making him the aim of their devout execrations from the pulpit and of their artillery in the field, after 'hunting and pursuing him,' to use the author's own words, 'round about the kingdom with fire and sword;' after dethroning, seizing, and imprisoning him, now clamoured against the natural result of their own actions; and, pretending conscience and the covenant, felt extreme tenderness for the inviolability and sacredness of the king's person, which they had endangered by their war, and violated by their chains. It would have been well for them if they had attended to the salutary warning given to them by our author, and, withholding their confidence from men exasperated beyond the just hope of a reconciliation, had forborne to coalesce with the royalists, by whom they were soon to be crushed in one common ruin with their immediate enemies, the Independents."--(*Life of Milton*, p. 299—300.)

friend there was in it, to cast an odious envy upon them to whom it was pretended to be sent in charity. Nor let any man be deluded by either the ignorance, or the notorious hypocrisy and selfrepugnance of our dancing divines, who have the conscience and the boldness to come with scripture in their mouths, glossed and fitted for their turns with a double contradictory sense, transforming the sacred verity of God to an idol with two faces, looking at once two several ways; and with the same quotations to charge others, which in the same case they made serve to justify themselves. For while the hope to be made classic and provincial lords led them on, while pluralities greased them thick and deep, to the shame and scandal of religion, more than all the sects and heresies they exclaim against; then to fight against the king's person, and no less a party of his lords and commons, or to put force upon both the houses, was good, was lawful, was no resisting of superior powers; they only were powers not to be resisted, who countenanced the good, and punished the evil.

7. But now that their censorious domineering is not suffered to be universal, truth and conscience to be freed, tithes and pluralities to be no more, though competent allowance provided, and the warm experience of large gifts, and they so good at taking them; yet now to exclude and seize upon impeached members, to bring delinquents without exemption to a fair tribunal by the common national law against murder, is now to be no less than Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. He who but erewhile in the pulpits was a cursed tyrant, an

enemy to God and saints, laden with all the innocent blood spilt in three kingdoms, and so to be fought against; is now, though nothing penitent or altered from his first principles, a lawful magistrate, a sovereign lord, the Lord's anointed, not to be touched, though by themselves imprisoned. As if this only were obedience, to preserve the mere useless bulk of his person, and that only in prison, not in the field, not to disobey his commands, deny him his dignity and office, everywhere to resist his power, but where they think it only surviving in their own faction.

8. But who in particular is a tyrant, cannot be determined in a general discourse, otherwise than by supposition; his particular charge, and the sufficient proof of it, must determine that: which I leave to magistrates, at least to the uprighter sort of them, and of the people, though in number less by many, in whom faction least hath prevailed above the law of nature and right reason, to judge as they find cause. But this I dare own as part of my faith, that if such a one there be, by whose commission whole massacres have been committed on his faithful subjects, (⁵) his provinces offered to

(⁵) The following are a few of the crimes which Milton, in the "Eikonoklastes" imputes to Charles I. "After the suspected poisoning of his father, not inquired into, but smothered up, and him protected and advanced to the very half of his kingdom, who was accused in parliament to be author of the fact; (with much more evidence than Duke Dudley, that false protector, is accused upon record to have poisoned Edward the Sixth;) after all his rage and persecution, after so many years of cruel war, on his people in three kingdoms! Whence the author of 'Truths Manifest,' a Scotsman, not unacquainted with affairs,

pawn or alienation, as the hire of those whom he had solicited to come in and destroy whole cities and countries; be he king, or tyrant, or emperor, the sword of justice is above him; (⁶) in whose hand soever is found sufficient power to avenge the effusion, and so great a deluge of innocent blood. For if all human power to execute, not accidentally but intendedly, the wrath of God upon evil-doers without exception, be of God; then that power, whether ordinary, or if that fail, extraordinary, so executing that intent of God, is lawful, and not to be resisted. But to unfold more at large this whole question, though with all expe-

positively affirms, ‘that there hath been more Christian blood shed by the commission, approbation, and connivance of King Charles and his father, James, in the latter end of their reigns, than in the Ten Roman Persecutions.’ Not to speak of those many whippings, pillories, and other corporal inflictions, whereof his reign also, before this war, was not unbloody: some have died in prison under cruel restraint, others in banishment, whose lives were shortened through the rigour of that persecution, wherewith so many years he infested the true church.” “ Yet here,” in the *Eikon Basilikè*, he asks, “whose innocent blood he hath shed, what widows’ or orphans’ tears can witness against him?”—(*Eikonoklastes*, §. 9.)

(⁶) What he here alludes to is explained at large in the “*Eikonoklastes*,” where he says, “After the beginning of this parliament, whom he saw so resolute and unanimous to relieve the Commonwealth, and that the Earl of Strafford was condemned to die, other of his evil counsellors impeached and imprisoned; to show there wanted not evil counsel within himself sufficient to begin a war upon his subjects, though no way by them provoked, he sends an agent with letters to the King of Denmark, requiring aid against the parliament: and that aid was coming, when divine Providence, to divert them, sent a sudden torrent of Swedes into the bowels of Denmark.” (§. 10. See also §. 12, 13, 18, 21, 22.)

dient brevity, I shall here set down, from first beginning, the original of kings; how and wherefore exalted to that dignity above their brethren; and from thence shall prove, that turning to tyranny they may be as lawfully deposed and punished, as they were at first elected: this I shall do by authorities and reasons, not learnt in corners among schisms and heresies, as our doubling divines are ready to calumniate, but fetched out of the midst of choicest and most authentic learning, and no prohibited authors; nor many heathen, but mosaical, Christian, orthodoxal, and which must needs be more convincing to our adversaries, presbyterial.

9. No man, who knows aught, can be so stupid to deny, that all men naturally were born free, (7) being the image and resemblance of God himself,

(7) But Sir Robert Filmer, who made pretensions to know something, and those who, since his time, have stood up in defence of absolute monarchy, maintain, on the contrary, that "all men are born slaves;" and it must be acknowledged that, in most countries, experience is on their side. Upon this proposition, however, Locke makes himself merry in his first book on Government, observing, that "we must believe them upon their own bare words, when they tell us we are all born slaves, and must continue so, there is no remedy for it: life and thralldom we entered upon together, and can never be quit of the one till we part with the other." Sir Robert Filmer's argument is ingenious. "Adam," he says, "was an absolute monarch, and so are all princes ever since." But, as we are all descended from Adam, we must all be princes, born with the same right to absolute dominion over each other; and it is some obscure perception of this truth, some secret inkling of their indefeasible rights, that urges so many of Adam's children to contend for empire. However, if princes would be content with the measure of authority possessed by Adam, and seek no other subjects than themselves, there would be few inclined to dispute their pretensions.

and were, by privilege above all the creatures, born to command, and not to obey: and that they lived so, till from the root of Adam's transgression falling among themselves to do wrong and violence, and foreseeing that such courses must needs tend to the destruction of them all, they agreed by common league to bind each other from mutual injury, and jointly to defend themselves against any, that gave disturbance or opposition to such agreement. Hence came cities, towns, and commonwealths. (8) And because no faith in all was found sufficiently binding, they saw it needful to ordain some authority, that might restrain by force and punishment what was violated against peace and common right.

10. This authority and power of self-defence and preservation being originally and naturally in every one of them, and unitedly in them all; for ease, for order, and lest each man should be his own partial judge, they communicated and derived either to one, whom for the eminence of his wisdom and integrity they chose above the rest, or to

(8) Aristotle, who, in the first book of his *Politics*, has many very ingenious speculations on the origin and progress of society, observes, that "the union of various villages forms, at length a city ($\piολις$) or commonwealth, that finished fabric of society reaching, as near as may be, the bound of perfectness, self-sufficient and complete, constituted for safety, and productive of happiness." (c. 2.) And Goguet, a learned and sensible, though, in some things, a prejudiced writer, has traced more laboriously, with the help of our modern voyagers and travellers, the various steps by which man rises from a state of barbarism to the enjoyment of just laws and a free government. (*Origine des Loix*, t. i. p. 14—32.) Plato, in his "Republic and Laws," enters into the question in his usual profound and original way. See also, Locke on Government, b. ii. c. 8.

more than one, whom they thought of equal deserving : the first was called a king ; the other, magistrates : not to be their lords and masters, (though afterward those names in some places were given voluntarily to such as had been authors of inestimable good to the people,) but to be their deputies and commissioners, to execute, by virtue of their intrusted power, that justice, which else every man by the bond of nature and of covenant must have executed for himself, and for one another. And to him that shall consider well, why among free persons one man by civil right should bear authority and jurisdiction over another, no other end or reason can be imaginable.

11. These for a while governed well, and with much equity decided all things at their own arbitrement; till the temptation of such a power, left absolute in their hands, perverted them at length to injustice and partiality. (⁹) Then did they, who now by trial had found the danger and inconveniences of committing arbitrary power to any,

(⁹) In Media, a country afterwards noted for the completeness of its despotism, the people originally enjoyed a certain degree of freedom. Astyages, it seems, was the first prince who, in that ancient monarchy, perverted his government into a tyranny : for when the elder Cyrus, in his boyhood, signified to his mother, Mandane, a desire to remain in Media, in compliance with her sire's wishes, she was troubled with scruples respecting the notions he would be in danger of imbibing." Justice, said she to her son, is not the same thing in Media as in Persia ; for here *your grandfather has rendered himself master of every thing*, while in Persia justice consists in equality. *Your father obeys the laws, like the other citizens ; HE EVEN RECEIVES LAWS FROM THEM* ; for not his own will, but the law, is the rule of his actions."—(*Cyropad.* i. 3.)

invent laws, either framed or consented to by all, that should confine and limit the authority of whom they chose to govern them: that so man, of whose failing they had proof, might no more rule over them, but law and reason, abstracted as much as might be from personal errors and frailties. "While, as the magistrate was set above the people, so the law was set above the magistrate." When this would not serve, but that the law was either not executed, or misapplied, they were constrained from that time, the only remedy left them, to put conditions and take oaths from all kings and magistrates at their first instalment, to do impartial justice by law: who, upon those terms and no other, received allegiance from the people, that is to say, bond or covenant to obey them in execution of those laws, which they, the people, had themselves made or assented to. And this ofttimes with express warning, that if the king or magistrate proved unfaithful to his trust, the people would be disengaged. (¹⁰) They added also counsellors and parliaments, not to be only at his beck, but with

(¹⁰) Precisely the same doctrine is maintained by Locke, and is acknowledged ever since 1688, by the constitution of these realms. "It can never be supposed to be the will of the society, that the legislative should have a power to destroy that which every one designs to secure by entering into society, and for which the people submitted themselves to legislators of their own making. Whenever the legislators endeavour to take away, and destroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to slavery under arbitrary power, they put themselves into a state of war with the people, who are thereupon absolved from any further obedience, and are left to the common refuge which God hath provided for all men against force and violence."—(*Locke on Government*, b. ii. ch. 19.)

him or without him, at set times, or at all times, when any danger threatened, to have care of the public safety. Therefore saith Claudius Sesell, a French statesman, “ The parliament was set as a bridle to the king ;” which I instance rather, not because our English lawyers have not said the same long before, but because that French monarchy is granted by all to be a far more absolute one than ours. That this and the rest of what hath hitherto been spoken is most true, might be copiously made appear through all steries heathen and Christian ; even of those nations where kings and emperors have sought means to abolish all ancient memory of the people’s right by their encroachments and usurpations. But I spare long insertions, appealing to the German, French, Italian, Arragonian, English, and not least the Scottish histories : not forgetting this only by the way, that William the Norman, though a conqueror, and not unsworn at his coronation, was compelled, a second time, to take oath at St. Alban’s ere the people would be brought to yield obedience.

12. It being thus manifest, that the power of kings and magistrates is nothing else, but what is only derivative, transferred and committed to them in trust from the people to the common good of them all, in whom the power yet remains fundamentally, and cannot be taken from them, without a violation of their natural birthright ; and seeing that from hence Aristotle, and the best of political writers, have defined a king, “ him who governs to the good and profit of his people, and not for his

own ends ;" it follows from necessary causes, that the titles of sovereign lord, natural lord, and the like, are either arrogancies or flatteries, not admitted by emperors and kings of best note, and disliked by the church both of Jews (Isa. xxvi. 13.) and ancient Christians, as appears by Tertullian and others. Although generally the people of Asia, and with them the Jews also, (⁽¹⁾) especially since the time they chose a king against the advice and counsel of God, are noted by wise authors much inclinable to slavery.

13. Secondly, that to say, as is usual, the king hath as good right to his crown and dignity, as any man to his inheritance, is to make the subject no better than the king's slave, his chattel, or his possession that may be bought and sold : and doubtless, if hereditary title were sufficiently inquired, the best foundation of it would be found but either in courtesy or convenience. But suppose it to be of right hereditary, what can be more just and legal, if a subject for certain crimes be to

(¹) In the splendid discourse of Etienne de la Beotie, " De la Servitude Volontaire," this slavish disposition of the Jews is adverted to with singular energy of scorn. " Doubtless," he says, " there is no people upon earth, who, were the choice within their power, whether they would be governed by one man, or by law and reason, would not prefer the latter ; unless, indeed, the children of Israel, who, without constraint or necessity, made unto themselves a tyrant ; for which reason I never read their history without having my indignation roused, until I almost became inhuman enough to rejoice at the multitude of evils with which their kings overwhelmed them." See the whole discourse appended to " Montaigne's Essais," t. ix. p. 312—389. *Edit. de Coste, London, 1769.*

forfeit by law from himself and posterity all his inheritance to the king, than that a king, for crimes proportional, should forfeit all his title and inheritance to the people? Unless the people must be thought created all for him, he not for them, and they all in one body inferior to him single; which were a kind of treason against the dignity of mankind to affirm. (12)

14. Thirdly, it follows, that to say kings are accountable to none but God, is the overturning of all law and government. For if they may refuse to give account, then all covenants made with them at coronation, all oaths (13) are in vain, and

(12) James I., who, until he of Sans Souci disputed the title with him, was esteemed the Solomon of the North, agreed, on this point, with Milton; for, in his speech to the parliament in 1603, he maintains "that the special and greatest point of difference that is between a rightful king and an usurping tyrant, is this, that whereas the proud and ambitious tyrant doth think his kingdom and people are only ordained for satisfaction of his desires and unreasonable appetites; the righteous and just king doth by the contrary acknowledge himself to be ordained for the procuring of the wealth and property of the people." He makes no allusion indeed to freedom, valuable beyond all "wealth and property;" but the spread of knowledge was then narrow, and few minds were emancipated from the political ignorance of the darker ages.

(13) The same James, whose speech we have quoted above, again, in 1609, made the following admission in Parliament: "The king binds himself by a double oath, to the observation of the fundamental laws of his kingdom. Tacitly, as by being a king, and so bound to protect as well the people, as the laws of his kingdom, and expressly by his oath at his coronation; so as every just king, in a settled kingdom, is bound to observe that pacton made to his people, by his laws, in framing his government agreeable thereto. . . . Therefore a king governing

mere mockeries; all laws which they swear to keep, made to no purpose: for if the king fear not God, (as how many of them do not,) we hold then our lives and estates by the tenure of his mere grace and mercy, as from a god, not a mortal magistrate; a position that none but court-parasites or men besotted would maintain! Aristotle, therefore, whom we commonly allow for one of the best interpreters of nature and morality, writes in the fourth of his *Politics*, chap. x. that “monarchy unaccountable, is the worst sort of tyranny, and least of all to be endured by free-born men.”

15. And surely no Christian prince, not drunk with high mind, and prouder than those pagan Cæsars that deified themselves, would arrogate so unreasonably above human condition, or derogate so basely from a whole nation of men, his brethren, as if for him only subsisting, and to serve his glory, valuing them in comparison of his own brute will and pleasure no more than so many beasts, or vermin under his feet, not to be reasoned with, but to be trod on; among whom there might be found so many thousand men for wisdom, virtue, nobleness of mind, and all other respects but the

in a settled kingdom, leaves to be a king, and degenerates into a tyrant, as soon as he leaves off to rule according to his laws.” And again: “All kings that are not tyrants, or perjured, will be glad to bound themselves within the limits of their laws. And they that persuade them the contrary, *are vipers and pests both against them and the commonwealth.*” Here he paints, as if from the life, the advisers and court-parasites that surrounded his unhappy son.

fortune of his dignity, far above him. Yet some would persuade us that this absurd opinion was King David's, because in the 51st Psalm he cries out to God, "Against thee only have I sinned ;" as if David had imagined, that to murder Uriah and adulterate his wife had been no sin against his neighbour, whenas that law of Moses was to the king expressly, (Deut. xvii.,) not to think so highly of himself above his brethren. David, therefore, by those words could mean no other, than either that the depth of his guiltiness was known to God only, or to so few as had not the will or power to question him, or that the sin against God was greater beyond compare than against Uriah. Whatever his meaning were, any wise man will see, that the pathetical words of a psalm can be no certain decision to a point that hath abundantly more certain rules to go by.

16. How much more rationally spake the heathen king Demophoön, in a tragedy of Euripides, than these interpreters would put upon King David! "I rule not my people by tyranny, as if they were barbarians, but am myself liable, if I do unjustly, to suffer justly." Not unlike was the speech of Trajan, the worthy emperor, to one whom he made general of his prætorian forces : "Take this drawn sword," saith he, "to use for me, if I reign well; if not, to use against me." Thus Dion relates. And not Trajan only, but Theodosius, the younger, a Christian emperor, and one of the best, caused it to be enacted as a rule undeniably fit to be acknowledged by all kings and emperors, that a prince is bound to the laws; that on

the authority of law the authority of a prince depends, and to the laws ought to submit. Which edict of his remains yet unrepealed in the Code of Justinian, (l. i. tit. 24,) as a sacred constitution to all the succeeding emperors. How then can any king in Europe maintain and write himself accountable to none but God, when emperors in their own imperial statutes have written and decreed themselves accountable to law? And indeed where such account is not feared, he that bids a man reign over him above law, may bid as well a savage beast.

17. It follows, lastly, that since the king or magistrate holds his authority of the people, both originally and naturally for their good, in the first place, and not his own, then may the people, as oft as they shall judge it for the best, either choose him or reject him, retain him or depose him, though no tyrant, merely by the liberty and right of free-born men to be governed as seems to them best. This, though it cannot but stand with plain reason, shall be made good also by Scripture, (Deut. xvii. 14,) "When thou art come into the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations about me." These words confirm us that the right of choosing, yea of changing their own government, is by the grant of God himself in the people. And therefore when they desired a king, though then under another form of government, and though their changing displeased him, yet he that was himself their king, and rejected by them, would not be a hinderance to what they intended, further than by

persuasion, but that they might do therein as they saw good, (1 Sam. viii.,) only he reserved to himself the nomination of who should reign over them. Neither did that exempt the king, as if he were to God only accountable, though by his especial command anointed. Therefore “ David first made a covenant with the elders of Israel, and so was by them anointed king,” (2 Sam. v. 3; 1 Chron. xi.) And Jehoiada the priest, making Jehoash king, made a covenant between him and the people, (2 Kings, xi. 17.) Therefore when Roboam, at his coming to the crown, rejected those conditions, which the Israelites brought him, hear what they answer him, “ What portion have we in David, or inheritance in the son of Jesse? See to thine own house, David.” And for the like conditions not performed, all Israel before that time deposed Samuel; not for his own default, but for the misgovernment of his sons.

18. But some will say to both these examples, it was evilly done. I answer, that not the latter, because it was expressly allowed them in the law, to set up a king if they pleased; and God himself joined with them in the work; though in some sort it was at that time displeasing to him, in respect of old Samuel, who had governed them uprightly. As Livy praises the Romans, who took occasion from Tarquinius, a wicked prince, to gain their liberty, which to have extorted, saith he, from Numa, or any of the good kings before, had not been seasonable. Nor was it in the former example done unlawfully; for when Roboam had prepared a huge army to reduce the Israelites, he

was forbidden by the prophet, (1 Kings, xii. 24,) "Thus saith the Lord, ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren, for this thing is from me." He calls them their brethren, not rebels, and forbids to be proceeded against them, owning the thing himself, not by single providence, but by approbation, and that not only of the act, as in the former example, but of the fit season also; he had not otherwise forbid to molest them. And those grave and wise counsellors, whom Rehoboam first advised with, spake no such thing, as our old gray-headed flatterers now are wont—stand upon your birth-right, scorn to capitulate, you hold of God, not of them;—for they knew no such matter, unless conditionally, but gave him politic counsel, as in a civil transaction.

19. Therefore kingdom and magistracy, whether supreme or subordinate, is called "a human ordinance," (1 Pet. ii. 13, &c.;) which we are there taught is the will of God we should submit to, so far as for the punishment of evil-doers, and the encouragement of them that do well. "Submit," saith he, "as free men." "But to any civil power unaccountable, unquestionable, and not to be resisted, no not in wickedness, and violent actions, how can we submit as free men?" "There is no power but of God," saith Paul, (Rom. xiii. ;) as much as to say, God put it into man's heart to find out that way at first for common peace and preservation, approving the exercise thereof; else it contradicts Peter, who calls the same authority an ordinance of man. It must be also understood of lawful and just power, else we read of great power

in the affairs and kingdoms of the world permitted to the devil: for saith he to Christ, (Luke, iv. 6,) all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them, for it is delivered to me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it: neither did he lie, or Christ gainsay what he affirmed; for in the thirteenth of the Revelation, we read how the dragon gave to the beast his power, his seat, and great authority: which beast so authorized most expound to be the tyrannical powers and kingdoms of the earth. Therefore Saint Paul in the forecited chapter tells us, that such magistrates he means, as are not a terror to the good, but to the evil; such as bear not the sword in vain, but to punish offenders, and to encourage the good.

20. If such only be mentioned here as powers to be obeyed, and our submission to them only required, then doubtless those powers that do the contrary, are no powers ordained of God; and by consequence no obligation laid upon us to obey or not to resist them. And it may be well observed, that both these apostles, whenever they give this precept, express it in terms not concrete, but abstract, as logicians are wont to speak; that is, they mention the ordinance, the power, the authority, before the persons that execute it; and what that power is, lest we should be deceived, they describe exactly. So that if the power be not such, or the person execute not such power, neither the one nor the other is of God, but of the devil, and by consequence to be resisted. From this exposition Chrysostom also, on the same place, dissents not; explaining that these words were not written in behalf of a tyrant. And this is verified by David,

himself a king, and likeliest to be the author of the Psalm (xciv. 20,) which saith, “ Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee?” And it were worth the knowing, since kings in these days, and that by Scripture, boast the justness of their title, by holding it immediately of God, yet cannot show the time when God ever set on the throne them or their forefathers, but only when the people chose them; why by the same reason, since God ascribes as oft to himself the casting down of princes from the throne, it should not be thought as lawful, and as much from God, when none are seen to do it but the people, and that for just causes. For if it needs must be a sin in them to depose, it may as likely be a sin to have elected. And contrary, if the people’s act in election be pleaded by a king, as the act of God, and the most just title to enthrone him, why may not the people’s act of rejection be as well pleaded by the people as the act of God, and the most just reason to depose him? So that we see the title and just right of reigning or deposing, in reference to God, is found in Scripture to be all one; visible only in the people, and depending merely upon justice and demerit. Thus far hath been considered chiefly the power of kings and magistrates; how it was and is originally the people’s, and by them conferred in trust only to be employed to the common peace and benefit; with liberty therefore and right remaining in them, to reassume it to themselves, if by kings or magistrates it be abused; or to dispose of it by any alteration, as they shall judge most conducing to the public good.

21. We may from hence with more ease and force of argument determine what a tyrant is, and what the people may do against him. A tyrant, whether by wrong or by right coming to the crown, is he who, regarding neither law nor the common good, reigns only for himself and his faction: thus St. Basil among others defines him. And because his power is great, his will boundless and exorbitant, the fulfilling whereof is for the most part accompanied with innumerable wrongs and oppressions of the people, murders, massacres, rapes, adulteries, desolation, and subversion of cities and whole provinces; look how great a good and happiness a just king is, so great a mischief is a tyrant; as he the public father of his country, so this the common enemy. Against whom what the people lawfully may do, as against a common pest and destroyer of mankind, I suppose no man of clear judgment need go further to be guided than by the very principles of nature in him.

22. But because it is the vulgar folly of men to desert their own reason, and shutting their eyes, to think they see best with other men's, I shall show, by such examples as ought to have most weight with us, what hath been done in this case heretofore. The Greeks and Romans, as their prime authors witness, held it not only lawful, but a glorious and heroic deed, rewarded publicly with statues and garlands, to kill an infamous tyrant (¹⁴) at any time without trial: and but rea-

(¹⁴) All antiquity is unanimous upon this point: "States,"

son, that he, who trod down all law, should not be vouchsafed the benefit of law. Insomuch that Seneca, the tragedian, brings in Hercules, the grand suppressor of tyrants, thus speaking:—

—————*Victima haud ulla amplior
Potest, magisque opima mactari Jovi
Quam rex iniquus*—————

—————*There can be slain
No sacrifice to God more acceptable
Than an unjust and wicked king*—————

23. But of these I name no more, lest it be objected they were heathen; and come to produce another sort of men, that had the knowledge of true religion. Among the Jews this custom of tyrant-killing was not unusual. First, Ehud, a man whom God had raised to deliver Israel from Eglon king of Moab, who had conquered and ruled over them eighteen years, being sent to him as an ambassador with a present, slew him in his own house. But he was a foreign prince, an enemy,

says Aristotle, “decree the most illustrious rewards, not to him who catches a thief, but to him who kills a tyrant.” (*Politics*, I. ii. c. 5.) Cicero, speaking of the identity of the just and the useful, introduces the general opinion of the Roman people on tyrannicide; and the passage is prefaced by the remark, that when a man begins to entertain doubts as to whether a certain act be criminal or not, he frequently comes, in time, to confound honour and baseness. “What crime can be greater,” says he, “than killing not merely a man, but a friend? And yet, is he criminal who kills a tyrant, though he should happen to be his friend? *Populo quidem Romano non videtur, qui ex omnibus præclaris factis illud pulcherrimum existimat.*”—(*De Officiis*, iii. 4.) See the Valerian Law in Plutarch in *Publicol.* c. xi. *εγραψε γαρ νόμον, &c.*

and Ehud besides had special warrant from God. To the first I answer, it imports not whether foreign or native: for no prince so native but professes to hold by law; which when he himself overthrows, breaking all the covenants and oaths that gave him title to his dignity, and were the bond and alliance between him and his people, what differs he from an outlandish king, or from an enemy?

24. For look how much right the king of Spain hath to govern us at all, so much right hath the king of England to govern us tyrannically. If he, though not bound to us by any league, coming from Spain in person to subdue us, or to destroy us, might lawfully by the people of England either be slain in fight, or put to death in captivity, what hath a native king to plead, bound by so many covenants, benefits, and honours, to the welfare of his people; why he through the contempt of all laws and parliaments, the only tie of our obedience to him, for his own will's sake, and a boasted prerogative unaccountable, after seven years' warring and destroying of his best subjects, overcome, and yielded prisoner, should think to scape unquestionable, as a thing divine, in respect of whom so many thousand Christians destroyed should lie unaccounted for, polluting with their slaughtered carcasses all the land over, and crying for vengeance against the living that should have righted them? Who knows not that there is a mutual bond of amity and brotherhood between man and man over all the world, neither is it the English sea that can sever us from that duty and relation:

a straiter bond yet there is between fellow-subjects, neighbours, and friends. But when any of these do one to another so as hostility could do no worse, what doth the law decree less against them, than open enemies and invaders? or if the law be not present or too weak, what doth it warrant us to less than single defence or civil war? and from that time forward the law of civil defensive war differs nothing from the law of foreign hostility. Nor is it distance of place that makes enmity, but enmity that makes distance. He therefore that keeps peace with me, near or remote, of whatsoever nation, is to me, as far as all civil and human offices, an Englishman and a neighbour: but if an Englishman, forgetting all laws, human, civil, and religious, offend against life and liberty, to him offended, and to the law in his behalf, though born in the same womb, he is no better than a Turk, a Saracen, a heathen.

25. This is gospel, and this was ever law among equals; how much rather then in force against any king whatever, who in respect of the people is confessed inferior and not equal: to distinguish therefore of a tyrant by outlandish, or domestic, is a weak evasion. To the second, that he was an enemy; I answer, what tyrant is not? yet Eglon by the Jews had been acknowledged as their sovereign, they had served him eighteen years, as long almost as we our William the Conqueror, in all which he could not be so unwise a statesman, but to have taken of them oaths of fealty and allegiance; by which they made themselves his proper

subjects, as their homage and present sent by Ehud testified. To the third, that he had special warrant to kill Eglon in that manner, it cannot be granted, because not expressed; it is plain, that he was raised by God to be a deliverer, and went on just principles, such as were then and ever held allowable to deal so by a tyrant, that could no otherwise be dealt with.

26. Neither did Samuel, though a prophet, with his own hand abstain from Agag; a foreign enemy, no doubt; but mark the reason: "As thy sword hath made women childless;" a cause that by the sentence of law itself nullifies all relations. And as the law is between brother and brother, father and son, master and servant, wherefore not between king, or rather tyrant, and people? And whereas Jehu had special command to slay Jehoram, a successive and hereditary tyrant, it seems not the less imitable for that; for where a thing grounded so much on natural reason hath the addition of a command from God, what does it but establish the lawfulness of such an act? Nor is it likely that God, who had so many ways of punishing the house of Ahab, would have sent a subject against his prince, if the fact in itself, as done to a tyrant, had been of bad example. And if David refused to lift his hand against the Lord's anointed, the matter between them was not tyranny, but private enmity, and David as a private person had been his own revenger, not so much the people's: but when any tyrant at this day can show himself to be the Lord's anointed, the only mentioned reason

why David withheld his hand, he may then, but not till then, presume on the same privilege.

27. We may pass therefore hence to Christian times. And first, our Saviour himself, how much he favoured tyrants, and how much intended they should be found or honoured among Christians, declared his mind not obscurely; accounting their absolute authority no better than Gentilism, yea, though they flourished it over with the splendid name of benefactors; charging those that would be his disciples to usurp no such dominion; but that they, who were to be of most authority among them, should esteem themselves ministers and servants to the public. Matt. xx. 25: "The princes of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them;" and Mark x. 42: "They that seem to rule," saith he, either slighting or accounting them no lawful rulers; "but ye shall not be so, but the greatest among you shall be your servant." And although he himself were the meekest, and came on earth to be so, yet to a tyrant we hear him not vouchsafe an humble word: but, "Tell that fox," Luke, xiii. "So far we ought to be from thinking that Christ and his gospel should be made a sanctuary for tyrants from justice, to whom his law before never gave such protection." And wherefore did his mother, the virgin Mary, give such praise to God in her prophetic song, that he had now, by the coming of Christ, cut down dynastas, or proud monarchs, from the throne, if the church, when God manifests his power in them to do so, should rather choose all misery and vassalage to serve

them, and let them still sit on their potent seats to be adored for doing mischief?

28. Surely it is not for nothing, that tyrants, by a kind of natural instinct, both hate and fear none more than the true church and saints of God, as the most dangerous enemies and subverters of monarchy, though indeed of tyranny; hath not this been the perpetual cry of courtiers and court-prelates? whereof no likelier cause can be alleged, but that they well discerned the mind and principles of most devout and zealous men, and indeed the very discipline of church, tending to the dissolution of all tyranny. No marvel then if since the faith of Christ received, in purer or impurer times, to depose a king and put him to death for tyranny, hath been accounted so just and requisite, that neighbour kings have both upheld and taken part with subjects in the action. And Ludovicus Pius, himself an emperor, and son of Charles the Great, being made judge (du Haillan is my author) between Milegast, king of the Vultzes, and his subjects, who had deposed him, gave his verdict for the subjects, and for him whom they had chosen in his room. Note here, that the right of electing whom they please is, by the impartial testimony of an emperor, in the people: for, said he, “A just prince ought to be preferred before an unjust, and the end of government before the prerogative.”

29. And Constantinus Leo, another emperor, in the Byzantine laws saith, “That the end of a king is for the general good, which he not performing, is but the counterfeit of a king.” And to prove.

that some of our own monarchs have acknowledged, that their high office exempted them not from punishment, they had the sword of St. Edward borne before them by an officer, who was called earl of the palace, even at the times of their highest pomp and solemnities; to mind them, saith Matthew Paris, the best of our historians, “ that if they erred, the sword had power to restrain them.” And what restraint the sword comes to at length, having both edge and point, if any sceptic will doubt, let him feel. It is also affirmed from diligent search made in our ancient books of law, that the peers and barons of England had a legal right to judge the king: ⁽¹⁵⁾ which was the cause most likely, (for it could be no slight cause,) that they were called his peers, or equals. This, however,

(¹⁵) Of this the reader may see abundant proofs in Sir Ralph Sadleir’s “ Rights of the Kingdom,” published in 1649, 4to. “ If it were asked of some late courtiers,” observes this learned writer, “ they would say, perhaps, a statute toucheth not the king, except he be expressly named. So would I say also if I could find it declared in ancient parliaments, before the times came to be *so tainted with the king’s evil*, which himself would not, or at least did not cure. But my words must not determine it: let us come to the laws themselves, and those that were most likely to know their meaning. One of the chapters of Marlbridge is, that the Great Charter should in all points be duly kept, as well in those things that touched the king himself, as any other; and that writs should be granted freely against any that infringe it. And that this did reach the king before, and not first granted by Henry III., or extracted from him or others by a conquering sword, we may appeal to the Mirror, (written for the most part before the Conquest, if the great judge deceive us not,) which among the Saxon parliaments, at the first moulding of this kingdom, telleth us it was ordained that the king’s

may stand immovable, so long as man hath to deal with no better than man; that if our law judge all men to the lowest by their peers, it should, in all equity, ascend also, and judge the highest.

30. And so much I find both in our own and foreign story, that dukes, earls, and marquisses were at first not hereditary, not empty and vain titles, but names of trust and office, and with the office ceasing; as induces me to be of opinion, that every worthy man in parliament, (for the word baron imports no more,) might for the public good be thought a fit peer and judge of the king, without regard had to petty caveats and circumstances, the chief impediment in high affairs, and ever stood upon most by circumstantial men. Whence doubtless our ancestors who were not ignorant with what rights either nature or ancient constitution had endowed them, when oaths both at coronation and renewed in parliament would not serve, thought it no way illegal, to depose and put to death their tyrannous kings. Insomuch that the parliament drew up a charge against Richard the Second, and the commons requested to have judgment decreed against him, that the realm might not be endangered. And Peter Martyr, a divine of foremost rank, on the third of Judges approves their doings. Sir Thomas Smith also, a Protestant and a statesman, in his Commonwealth

courts should be open to all plaints; by which they had original writs without delay, as well against the king or queen, as any other of the people.—c. i. sect. 3.”—(*Rights of the Kingdom*, p. 25, 26.)

of England, putting the question, “ whether it be lawful to rise against a tyrant;” answers, “ that the vulgar judge of it according to the event, and the learned according to the purpose of them that do it.”

31. But far before those days, Gildas, the most ancient of all our historians, speaking of those times wherein the Roman empire decaying, quitted and relinquished what right they had by conquest to this island, and resigned it all into the people’s hands, testifies that the people thus reinvested with their own original right, about the year 446, both elected them kings, whom they thought best, (the first Christian British kings that ever reigned here since the Romans,) and by the same right, when they apprehended cause, usually deposed and put them to death. This is the most fundamental and ancient tenure, that any king of England can produce or pretend to; in comparison of which, all other titles and pleas are but of yesterday. If any object, that Gildas condemns the Britons for so doing, the answer is as ready; that he condemns them no more for so doing, than he did before for choosing such; for, saith he, “ They anointed them kings, not of God, but such as were more bloody than the rest.” Next, he condemns them not at all for deposing or putting them to death, but for doing it overhastily, without trial or well examining the cause, and for electing others worse in their room.

32. Thus we have here both domestic and most ancient examples, that the people of Britain have

deposed and put to death their kings in those primitive Christian times. And to couple reason with example, if the church in all ages, primitive, Romish, or Protestant, held it ever no less their duty than the power of their keys, though without express warrant of Scripture, to bring indifferently both king and peasant under the utmost rigour of their canons and censures ecclesiastical, even to the smiting him with a final excommunication, if he persist impenitent; what hinders, but that the temporal law both may and ought, though without a special text or precedent, extend with like indifference the civil sword, to the cutting off, without exemption, him that capitally offends, seeing that justice and religion are from the same God, and works of justice oftentimes more acceptable? Yet because that some lately, with the tongues and arguments of malignant backsliders, have written that the proceedings now in parliament against the king are without precedent from any Protestant state or kingdom, the examples which follow shall be all Protestant, and chiefly Presbyterian.

33. In the year 1546, the Duke of Saxony, Landgrave of Hesse, and the whole Protestant league, raised open war against Charles the Fifth, their emperor, sent him a defiance, renounced all faith and allegiance toward him, and debated long in council, whether they should give him so much as the title of Cæsar. (¹⁶) Let all men judge what

(¹⁶) Sleidan, I. xvii.

this wanted of deposing or of killing, but the power to do it.

34. In the year 1559, the Scots Protestants claiming promise of their queen-regent for liberty of conscience, she answering that promises were not to be claimed of princes beyond what was commodious for them to grant, told her to her face in the parliament then at Stirling, that if it were so, they renounced their obedience ; and soon after betook them to arms.⁽¹⁷⁾ Certainly, when allegiance is renounced, that very hour the king or queen is in effect deposed.

35. In the year 1564, John Knox, a most famous divine, and the reformer of Scotland to the Presbyterian discipline, at a general assembly maintained openly, in a dispute against Lethington the secretary of state, that subjects might and ought to execute God's judgments upon their king ; that the fact of Jehu and others against their king, having the ground of God's ordinary command to put such and such offenders to death, was not extraordinary, but to be imitated of all that preferred the honour of God to the affection of flesh and

(¹⁷) Buchanan Hist. I. xvi. The words of this distinguished historian are : “ Eodem quoque die, idem fœcialis retulit, pridie illius diei, procerum aliorumque civium frequentissimo consilio persuasum esse, omnia Regentis dicta, facta, consiliaque meram spectare tyrannidem. Igitur decretum factum, de abrogando ei magistratu, cui universi, ut justissimo, subscripterunt; legationemque, ei à genero et filia datam, inhibuerunt, eamque pro imperio quicquam agere, vetuerunt, usque ad generalem ordinum conventum, ab ipsis, ubi commodum foret, indicendum.”—(p. 544, 545, edit. of 1697.)

wicked princes; that kings, if they offend, have no privilege to be exempted from the punishments of law more than any other subject: so that if the king be a murderer, adulterer, or idolater, he should suffer, not as a king, but as an offender; and this position he repeats again and again before them. Answerable was the opinion of John Craig, another learned divine, and that laws made by the tyranny of princes, or the negligence of people, their posterity might abrogate, and reform all things according to the original institution of commonwealths. And Knox being commanded by the nobility to write to Calvin and other learned men for their judgments in that question, refused, alleging, that both himself was fully resolved in conscience, and had heard their judgments, and had the same opinion under handwriting of many the most godly and most learned that he knew in Europe; that if he should move the question to them again, what should he do but show his own forgetfulness or inconstancy? All this is far more largely in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, (l. iv.) with many other passages to this effect all the book over, set out with diligence by Scotsmen of best repute among them at the beginning of these troubles; as if they laboured to inform us what we were to do, and what they intended upon the like occasion.

36. And to let the world know, that the whole church and Protestant state of Scotland in those purest times of reformation were of the same belief, three years after, they met in the field Mary

their lawful and hereditary queen, took her prisoner, yielding before fight, kept her in prison, and the same year deposed her. (¹⁸)

37. And four years after that, the Scots in justification of their deposing Queen Mary, sent ambassadors to Queen Elizabeth, and in a written declaration alleged, that they had used towards her more lenity than she deserved ; that their ancestors had heretofore punished their kings by death or banishment ; that the Scots were a free nation, made king whom they freely chose, and with the same freedom unkinged him if they saw cause, by right of ancient laws and ceremonies yet remaining, and old customs yet among the highlanders in choosing the head of their clans or families ; all which, with many other arguments, bore witness, that regal power was nothing else but a mutual covenant or stipulation between king and people. (¹⁹) These were Scotchmen and Presbyterians : but what measure then have they lately offered, to think such liberty less befitting us than themselves, presuming to put him upon us for a master, whom their law scarce allows to be their own equal ? If now then we hear them in

(¹⁸) Buchan. Hist. I. xviii.

(¹⁹) Buch. Hist. I. xx. And in his dialogue, "De Jure Regni apud Scotos," a work dedicated to James I., this writer maintains, that when kings degenerate into tyrants they may be justly put to death. "Ut igitur cum hac multitudine agas," says he to Maitland, "si clamorissimum et importunissimum quemque roges, quid suppicio Caligulæ, Neronis, aut Domitiani sentiat, neminem eorum tam addictum regio nomini fore puto, ut non jure pœnas eos luisse fateatur."—(p. 14.)

another strain than heretofore in the purest times of their church, we may be confident it is the voice of faction speaking in them, not of truth and reformation. Which no less in England than in Scotland, by the mouths of those faithful witnesses commonly called puritans and non-conformists, spake as clearly for the putting down, yea the utmost punishing of kings, as in their several treatises may be read; even from the first reign of Elizabeth to these times. Insomuch that one of them, whose name was Gibson, foretold King James he should be rooted out, and conclude his race, if he persisted to uphold bishops. And that very inscription, stamped upon the first coins at his coronation, a naked sword in a hand with these words, "*Si mereor, in me,*" "Against me, if I deserve," not only manifested the judgment of that state, but seemed also to presage the sentence of divine justice in this event upon his son.

38. In the year 1581, the states of Holland, in a general assembly at the Hague, abjured all obedience and subjection to Philip, king of Spain; and in a declaration justify their so doing; for that by his tyrannous government, against faith so many times given and broken, he had lost his right to all the Belgic provinces; that therefore they deposed him, and declared it lawful to choose another in his stead.⁽²⁰⁾ From that time to this, no state or kingdom in the world hath equally prospered: but let them remember not to look

(20) Thuan. 1. lxxiv.

with an evil and prejudicial eye upon their neighbours, walking by the same rule.

39. But what need these examples to Presbyterians, I mean to those who now of late would seem so much to abhor deposing, wheras they to all Christendom have given the latest and the liveliest example of doing it themselves ? I question not the lawfulness of raising war against a tyrant in defence of religion, or civil liberty ; for no Protestant church, from the first Waldenses of Lyons and Languedoc to this day, but have done it round, and maintained it lawful. But this I doubt not to affirm, that the Presbyterians, who now so much condemn deposing, were the men themselves that deposed the king, and cannot, with all their shifting and relapsing, wash off the guiltiness from their own hands. For they themselves, by these their late doings, have made it guiltiness, and turned their own warrantable actions into rebellion (²¹)

40. There is nothing, that so actually makes a king of England, as rightful possession and supremacy in all causes both civil and ecclesiastical : and nothing that so actually makes a subject of England, as those two oaths of allegiance and supremacy observed without equivocating, or any mental reservation. Out of doubt then, when the king shall command things already constituted in

(²¹) The Presbyterians having taken up arms against the king, and fought with him in the field, had necessarily been often in a position where they might have slain him. If they were now right, therefore, they had then been wrong ; and vice versa.

church or state, obedience is the true essence of a subject, either to do, if it be lawful, or if he hold the thing unlawful, to submit to that penalty which the law imposes, so long as he intends to remain a subject. Therefore when the people, or any part of them, shall rise against the king and his authority, executing the law in any thing established, civil or ecclesiastical, I do not say it is rebellion, if the thing commanded though established be unlawful, and that they sought first all due means of redress ; (and no man is further bound to law;) but I say it is an absolute renouncing both of supremacy and allegiance, which in one word is an actual and total deposing of the king, and the setting up of another supreme authority over them.

41. And whether the Presbyterians have not done all this and much more, they will not put me, I suppose, to reckon up a seven years' story, fresh in the memory of all men. Have they not utterly broke the oath of allegiance, rejecting the king's command and authority sent them from any part of the kingdom, whether in things lawful or unlawful ? Have they not abjured the oath of supremacy, by setting up the parliament without the king, supreme to all their obedience ; and though their vow and covenant bound them in general to the parliament, yet sometimes adhering to the lesser part of lords and commons that remained faithful, as they term it, and even of them, one while to the commons without the lords, another while to the lords without the commons ? Have they not still declared their meaning, what-

ever their oath were, to hold them only for supreme, whom they found at any time most yielding to what they petitioned? Both these oaths, which were the straitest bond of an English subject in reference to the king, being thus broke and made void; it follows undeniably, that the king from that time was by them in fact absolutely deposed, and they no longer in reality to be thought his subjects, notwithstanding their fine clause in the covenant to preserve his person, crown, and dignity, set there by some dodging casuist with more craft than sincerity, to mitigate the matter, in case of ill success, and not taken, I suppose, by any honest man, but as a condition subordinate to every the least particle, that might more concern religion, liberty, or the public peace.

42. To prove it yet more plainly, that they are the men who have deposed the king, I thus argue. We know, that king and subject are relatives, and relatives have no longer being than in the relation; the relation between king and subject can be no other than regal authority and subjection. Hence I infer, past their defending, that if the subject, who is one relative, take away the relation, of force he takes away also the other relative: but the Presbyterians, who were one relative, that is to say, subjects, have for this seven years taken away the relation, that is to say, the king's authority, and their subjection to it; therefore the Presbyterians for these seven years have removed and extinguished the other relative, that is to say, the king; or to speak more in brief, have deposed

him; not only by depriving him the execution of his authority, but by conferring it upon others.

43. If then their oaths of subjection broken, new supremacy obeyed, new oaths and covenant taken, notwithstanding frivolous evasions, have in plain terms unkinged the king, much more than hath their seven years' war, not deposed him only, but outlawed him, and defied him as an alien, a rebel to law, and enemy to the state. It must needs be clear to any man not averse from reason, that hostility and subjection are two direct and positive contraries, and can no more in one subject stand together in respect of the same king, than one person at the same time can be in two remote places. Against whom therefore the subject is in act of hostility, we may be confident, that to him he is in no subjection: and in whom hostility takes place of subjection, for they can by no means consist together, to him the king can be not only no king, but an enemy.

44. So that from hence we shall not need dispute, whether they have deposed him, or what they have defaulted towards him as no king, but show manifestly how much they have done towards the killing him. Have they not levied all these wars against him, whether offensive or defensive, (for defence in war equally offends, and most prudently beforehand,) and given commission to slay, where they knew his person could not be exempt from danger? And if chance or flight had not saved him, how often had they killed him, directing their artillery, without blame

or prohibition, to the very place where they saw him stand ? Have they not sequestered him, judged or unjudged, and converted his revenue to other uses, detaining from him, as a grand delinquent, all means of livelihood, so that for them long since he might have perished, or have starved ? Have they not hunted and pursued him round about the kingdom with sword and fire ? Have they not formerly denied to treat with him, and their now recanting ministers preached against him, as a reprobate incurable, an enemy to God and his church, marked for destruction, and therefore not to be treated with ? Have they not besieged him, and to their power forbid him water and fire, save what they shot against him to the hazard of his life ? Yet while they thus assaulted and endangered it with hostile deeds, they swore in words to defend it, with his crown and dignity ; not in order, as it seems now, to a firm and lasting peace, or to his repentance after all this blood ; but simply, without regard, without remorse, or any comparable value of all the miseries and calamities suffered by the poor people, or to suffer hereafter, through his obstinacy or impenitence.

45. No understanding man can be ignorant, that covenants are ever made according to the present state of persons and of things ; and have ever the more general laws of nature and of reason included in them, though not expressed. If I make a voluntary covenant, as with a man to do him good, and he prove afterward a monster to me, I should conceive a disobligement. If I co-

venant, not to hurt an enemy, in favour of him and forbearance, and hope of his amendment, and he, after that, shall do me tenfold injury and mischief to what he had done when I so covenanted, and still be plotting what may tend to my destruction, I question not but that his after-actions release me; nor know I covenant so sacred, that withdraws me from demanding justice on him.

46. Howbeit, had not their distrust in a good cause, and the fast and loose of our prevaricating divines, overswayed, it had been doubtless better, not to have inserted in a covenant unnecessary obligations, and words, not works of supererogating allegiance to their enemy; no way advantageous to themselves, had the king prevailed, as to their cost many would have felt; but full of snare and distraction to our friends, useful only, as we now find, to our adversaries, who under such a latitude and shelter of ambiguous interpretation have ever since been plotting and contriving new opportunities to trouble all again. How much better had it been, and more becoming an undaunted virtue, to have declared openly and boldly whom and what power the people were to hold supreme, as on the like occasion Protestants have done before, and many conscientious men now in these times have more than once besought the parliament to do, that they might go on upon a sure foundation, and not with a riddling covenant in their mouths, seeming to swear counter, almost in the same breath, allegiance and no allegiance; which doubtless had drawn off all the minds of sincere men

from siding with them, had they not discerned their actions far more depositing him than their words upholding him; which words, made now the subject of cavillous interpretations, stood ever in the covenant, by judgment of the more discerning sort, an evidence of their fear, not of their fidelity.

47. What should I return to speak on, of those attempts for which the king himself hath often charged the Presbyterians of seeking his life, when-as, in the due estimation of things, they might without a fallacy be said to have done the deed outright? Who knows not, that the king is a name of dignity and office, not of person? Who therefore kills a king, must kill him while he is a king. Then they certainly, who by depositing him have long since taken from him the life of a king, his office and his dignity, they in the truest sense may be said to have killed the king: not only by their depositing and waging war against him, which besides the danger to his personal life, set him in the farthest opposite point from any vital function of a king, but by their holding him in prison, vanquished and yielded into their absolute and despotic power, which brought him to the lowest degradation and incapacity of the regal name. I say not by whose matchless valour, next under God, lest the story of their ingratitude thereupon carry me from the purpose in hand, which is to convince them, that they, which I repeat again, were the men who in the truest sense killed the king, not only as is proved before, but by depressing him, their king, far below the rank of a subject to the

condition of a captive, without intention to restore him, as the chancellor of Scotland in a speech told him plainly at Newcastle, unless he granted fully all their demands, which they knew he never meant.

48. Nor did they treat, or think of treating, with him, till their hatred to the army that delivered them, not their love or duty to the king, joined them secretly with men sentenced so oft for reprobates in their own mouths, by whose subtle inspiring they grew mad upon a most tardy and improper treaty. Whereas if the whole bent of their actions had not been against the king himself, but only against his evil counsellors, as they feigned, and published, wherefore did they not restore him all that while to the true life of a king, his office, crown, and dignity, when he was in their power, and they themselves his nearest counsellors? The truth therefore is, both that they would not, and that indeed they could not without their own certain destruction, having reduced him to such a final pass, as was the very death and burial of all that in him was regal, and from whence never king of England yet revived, but by the new reinforcement of his own party, which was a kind of resurrection to him.

49. Thus having quite extinguished all that could be in him of a king, and from a total privation clad him over, like another specifical thing, with forms and habitudes destructive to the former, they left in his person, dead as to law and all the civil right either of king or subject, the life only

of a prisoner, a captive, and a malefactor : whom the equal and impartial hand of justice finding, was no more to spare than another ordinary man : not only made obnoxious to the doom of law, by a charge more than once drawn up against him, and his own confession to the first article at Newport, but summoned and arraigned in the sight of God and his people, cursed and devoted to perdition worse than any Ahab, or Antiochus, with exhortation to curse all those in the name of God, that made not war against him, as bitterly as Meroz was to be cursed, that went not out against a Canaanitish king, almost in all the sermons, prayers, and fulminations, that have been uttered this seven years, by those cloven tongues of falsehood and dissension, who now, to the stirring up of new discord, acquit him ; and against their own discipline, which they boast to be the throne and sceptre of Christ, absolve him, unconfound him, though unconverted, unrepentant, insensible of all their precious saints and martyrs, whose blood they have so oft laid upon his head. And now again, with a new sovereign anointment, can wash it all off, as if it were as vile, and no more to be reckoned for than the blood of so many dogs in a time of pestilence : giving the most opprobious lie to all the acted zeal, that for these many years hath filled their bellies, and fed them fat upon the foolish people. Ministers of sedition, not of the gospel, who, while they saw it manifestly tend to civil war and bloodshed, never ceased exasperating the people against him ; and now, that they see it

likely to breed new commotion, cease not to incite others against the people, that have saved them from him, as if sedition were their only aim, whether against him or for him.

50. But God, as we have cause to trust, will put other thoughts into the people, and turn them from giving ear or heed to these mercenary noisemakers, of whose fury and false prophecies we have enough experience; and from the murmurs of new discord will incline them, to hearken rather with erected minds to the voice of our supreme magistracy, calling us to liberty, and the flourishing deeds of a reformed commonwealth; with this hope, that as God was heretofore angry with the Jews who rejected him and his form of government to choose a king, so that he will bless us, and be propitious to us, who reject a king to make him only our leader, and supreme governor, in the conformity, as near as may be, of his own ancient government; if we have at least but so much worth in us to entertain the sense of our future happiness, and the courage to receive what God vouchsafes us: wherein we have the honour to precede other nations, who are now labouring to be our followers.

51. For as to this question in hand, what the people by their just right may do in change of government, or of governor, we see it cleared sufficiently; besides other ample authority, even from the mouths of princes themselves. And surely they that shall boast, as we do, to be a free nation, and not have in themselves the power to remove or to abolish any governor supreme, or subordinate,

with the government itself upon urgent causes, may please their fancy with a ridiculous and painted freedom, fit to cozen babies ; but are indeed under tyranny and servitude ; as wanting that power, which is the root and source of all liberty, to dispose and economize in the land which God hath given them, as masters of family in their own house and free inheritance. Without which natural and essential power of a free nation, though bearing high their heads, they can in due esteem be thought no better than slaves and vassals born, in the tenure and occupation of another inheriting lord ; whose government, though not illegal, or intolerable, hangs over them as a lordly scourge, not as a free government ; and therefore to be abrogated.

52. How much more justly then may they fling off tyranny, or tyrants ; who being once deposed can be no more than private men, as subject to the reach of justice and arraignment as any other transgressors ? And certainly if men, not to speak of heathen, both wise and religious, have done justice upon tyrants what way they could soonest, how much more mild and humane then is it, to give them fair and open trial ; to teach lawless kings, and all who so much adore them, that not mortal man, or his imperious will, but justice, is the only true sovereign and supreme majesty upon earth ? Let men cease therefore, out of faction and hypocrisy, to make outcries and horrid things of things so just and honourable. Though perhaps till now, no Protestant state or kingdom can be alleged to have

openly put to death their king, which lately some have written, and imputed to their great glory ; much mistaking the matter. It is not, neither ought to be, the glory of a Protestant state, never to have put their king to death ; it is the glory of a Protestant king never to have deserved death. And if the parliament and military council do what they do without precedent, if it appear their duty, it argues the more wisdom, virtue, and magnanimity, that they know themselves able to be a precedent to others ; who perhaps in future ages, if they prove not too degenerate, will look up with honour, and aspire towards these exemplary and matchless deeds of their ancestors, as to the highest top of their civil glory and emulation ; which heretofore, in the pursuance of fame and foreign dominion, spent itself vaingloriously abroad ; but henceforth may learn a better fortitude, to dare execute highest justice on them, that shall by force of arms endeavour the oppressing and bereaving of religion and their liberty at home. That no unbridled potentate or tyrant, but to his sorrow, for the future may presume such high and irresponsible licence over mankind, to havoc and turn upside down whole kingdoms of men, as though they were no more in respect of his perverse will than a nation of pismires.

53. As for the party called Presbyterian, of whom I believe very many to be good and faithful Christians, though misled by some of turbulent spirit, I wish them, earnestly and calmly, not to fall off from their first principles, nor to affect rigour and superiority over men not under them ; not to compel

unforcible things, in religion especially, which, if not voluntary, becomes a sin ; not to assist the clamour and malicious drifts of men, whom they themselves have judged to be the worst of men, the obdurate enemies of God and his church : nor to dart against the actions of their brethren, for want of other argument, those wrested laws and scriptures thrown by prelates and malignants against their own sides, which though they hurt not otherwise, yet taken up by them to the condemnation of their own doings, give scandal to all men, and discover in themselves either extreme passion or apostacy. Let them not oppose their best friends and associates, who molest them not at all, infringe not the least of their liberties, unless they call it their liberty to bind other men's consciences, but are still seeking to live at peace with them and brotherly accord. Let them beware an old and perfect enemy, who, though he hope by sowing discord to make them his instruments, yet cannot forbear a minute the open threatening of his destined revenge upon them, when they have served his purposes. Let them fear therefore, if they be wise, rather what they have done already, than what remains to do, and be warned in time they put no confidence in princes whom they have provoked, lest they be added to the examples of those that miserably have tasted the event.

54. Stories can inform them how Christiern the Second, king of Denmark, not much above a hundred years past, driven out by his subjects, and received again upon new oaths and conditions, broke through them all to his most bloody revenge;

slaying his chief opposers, when he saw his time, both them and their children, invited to a feast for that purpose. How Maximilian dealt with those of Bruges, though by mediation of the German princes reconciled to them by solemn and public writings drawn and sealed. How the massacre at Paris was the effect of that credulous peace, which the French Protestants made with Charles IX. their king : and that the main visible cause, which to this day hath saved the Netherlands from utter ruin, was their final not believing the perfidious cruelty, which, as a constant maxim of state, hath been used by the Spanish kings on their subjects that have taken arms, and after trusted them ; as no latter age but can testify, heretofore in Belgia itself, and this very year in Naples. And to conclude with one past exception, though far more ancient, David, whose sanctified prudence might be alone sufficient, not to warrant us only, but to instruct us, when once he had taken arms, never after that trusted Saul, though with tears and much relenting he twice promised not to hurt him. These instances, few of many, might admonish them, both English and Scotch, not to let their own ends, and the driving on of a faction, betray them blindly into the snare of those enemies, whose revenge looks on them as the men who first begun, fomented, and carried on, beyond the cure of any sound or safe accommodation, all the evil which hath since unavoidably befallen them and their king.

55. I have something also to the divines, though brief to what were needful ; not to be disturbers of

the civil affairs, being in hands better able and more belonging to manage them ; but to study harder, and to attend the office of good pastors, knowing that he, whose flock is least among them, hath a dreadful charge, not performed by mounting twice into the chair with a formal preaching huddled up at the odd hours of a whole lazy week, but by incessant pains and watching, in season and out of season, from house to house, over the souls of whom they have to feed. Which if they ever well considered, how little leisure would they find, to be the most pragmatical sidesmen of every popular tumult and sedition ! and all this while are to learn what the true end and reason is of the gospel which they teach ; and what a world it differs from the censorious and supercilious lording over conscience. It would be good also they lived so as might persuade the people they hated covetousness, which, worse than heresy, is idolatry ; hated pluralities, and all kind of simony ; left rambling from benefice to benefice, like ravenous wolves seeking where they may devour the biggest. Of which if some, well and warmly seated from the beginning, be not guilty, it were good they held not conversation with such as are. Let them be sorry, that, being called to assemble about reforming the church, they fell to proggng and soliciting the parliament, though they had renounced the name of priests, for a new settling of their tithes and oblations ; and double-lined themselves with spiritual places of commodity beyond the possible discharge of their duty. Let them assemble in con-

sistory with their elders and deacons, according to ancient ecclesiastical rule, to the preserving of church discipline, each in his several charge, and not a pack of clergymen by themselves to belly-cheer in their presumptuous Sion, or to promote designs, abuse and gull the simple laity, and stir up tumult, as the prelates did, for the maintenance of their pride and avarice.

56. These things if they observe, and wait with patience, no doubt but all things will go well without their importunities or exclamations: and the printed letters, which they send subscribed with the ostentation of great characters and little moment, would be more considerable than now they are. But if they be the ministers of mammon instead of Christ, and scandalize his church with the filthy love of gain, aspiring also to sit the closest and the heaviest of all tyrants upon the conscience, and fall notoriously into the same sins, whereof so lately and so loud they accused the prelates; as God rooted out those wicked ones immediately before, so will he root out them, their imitators: and to vindicate his own glory and religion, will uncover their hypocrisy to the open world; and visit upon their own heads that “Curse ye Meroz,” the very motto of their pulpits, wherewith so frequently, not as Meroz, but more like atheists, they have blasphemed the vengeance of God, and traduced the zeal of his people.

57. And that they be not what they go for, true ministers of the Protestant doctrine, taught by those abroad, famous and religious men, who first

reformed the church, or by those no less zealous, who withstood corruption and the bishops here at home, branded with the name of puritans and non-conformists, we shall abound with testimonies to make appear: that men may yet more fully know the difference between Protestant divines, and these pulpit-firebrands. “ Such is the state of things at this day, that men neither can, nor will, nor indeed, ought to endure longer the domination of you princes.”⁽²²⁾ “ Neither is Cæsar to make war as head of Christendom, protector of the church, defender of the faith; these titles being false and windy, and most kings being the greatest enemies to religion.”⁽²³⁾ What hinders then, but that we may depose or punish them? These also are recited by Cochlæus in his Miscellanies to be the words of Luther, or some other eminent divine, then in Germany, when the Protestants there entered into solemn covenant at Smalcaldia: *Ut ora iis obturem, &c.* “ That I may stop their mouths, the pope and emperor are not born, but elected, and may also be deposed, as hath been often done.” If Luther, or whoever else, thought so, he could not stay there; for the right of birth or succession can be no privilege in nature, to let a tyrant sit irremovable over a nation freeborn, without transforming that nation from the nature and condition of men born free, into natural, hereditary, and successive slaves. Therefore he saith

(22) “ *Is est hodie rerum status,*” &c.—Luther. Lib. contra rusticos apud Sleidan. l. v.

(23) “ *Neque vero Cæsarem,*” &c.—Lib. de Bello contra Turcas, apud Sleid. l. xiv.

further; “To displace and throw down this ex-actor, this Phalaris, this Nero, is a work pleasing to God;” namely, for being such a one: which is a moral reason. Shall then so slight a consideration as his hap to be not elective simply, but by birth, which was a mere accident, overthrow that which is moral, and make unpleasing to God that which otherwise had so well pleased him? Certainly not: for if the matter be rightly argued, election, much rather than chance, binds a man to content himself with what he suffers by his own bad election. Though indeed neither the one nor other, binds any man, much less any people, to a necessary sufferance of those wrongs and evils, which they have ability and strength enough given them to remove.

58. “When kings reign perfidiously, and against the rule of Christ, they may, according to the word of God be deposed.”⁽²⁴⁾ “I know not how it comes to pass, that kings reign by succession, unless it be with consent of the whole people.”⁽²⁵⁾ “But when by suffrage and consent of the whole people, or the better part of them, a tyrant is deposed or put to death, God is the chief leader in that action.”⁽²⁶⁾ “Now that we are so lukewarm in upholding public justice, we endure the vices of tyrants to reign now-a-days with impunity;

(²⁴) “Quando vero perfidè,” &c.—Zwinglius, tom. i. articul. 42.

(²⁵) “Mihi ergo compertum non est,” &c.—Ibid.

(²⁶) “Quum vero consensu,” &c.—Ibid.

justly therefore by them we are trod underfoot, and shall at length with them be punished. Yet ways are not wanting by which tyrants may be removed, but there wants public justice.”⁽²⁷⁾ “ Beware, ye tyrants! for now the gospel of Jesus Christ, spreading far and wide, will renew the lives of many to love innocence and justice; which if ye also shall do, ye shall be honoured. But if ye shall go on to rage and do violence, ye shall be trampled on by all men.”⁽²⁸⁾ “ When the Roman empire, or any other, shall begin to oppress religion, and we negligently suffer it, we are as much guilty of religion so violated, as the oppressors themselves.”⁽²⁹⁾

59. “ Now-a-days monarchs pretend always in their titles, to be kings by the grace of God: but how many of them to this end only pretend it, that they may reign without control! for to what purpose is the grace of God mentioned in the title of kings, but that they may acknowledge no superior? In the meanwhile God, whose name they use to support themselves, they willingly would tread under their feet. It is therefore a mere cheat, when they boast to reign by the grace of God.”⁽³⁰⁾ “ Earthly princes depose themselves, while they

⁽²⁷⁾ “ Nunc cum tam tepidi sunus,” &c.—Zwinglius, tom. i. articul. 42.

⁽²⁸⁾ “ Cavete vobis ô tyranni.”—Ibid.

⁽²⁹⁾ “ Romanum imperium imò quodque,” &c.—Idem. Epist. ad Conrad. Somium.

⁽³⁰⁾ “ Hodie monarchæ semper in suis titulis,” &c.—Calvin on Daniel, c. iv. v. 25.

rise against God ; yea they are unworthy to be numbered among men : rather it behoves us to spit upon their heads, than to obey them." (31)

60. " If a sovereign prince endeavour by arms to defend transgressors, to subvert those things which are taught in the word of God, they, who are in authority under him, ought first to dissuade him ; if they prevail not, and that he now bears himself not as a prince but as an enemy, and seeks to violate privileges and rights granted to inferior magistrates or commonalties, it is the part of pious magistrates, imploring first the assistance of God, rather to try all ways and means, than to betray the flock of Christ to such an enemy of God : for they also are to this end ordained, that they may defend the people of God, and maintain those things which are good and just. For to have supreme power lessens not the evil committed by that power, but makes it the less tolerable, by how much the more generally hurtful. Then certainly the less tolerable, the more unpardonably to be punished." (32) Of Peter Martyr we have spoke before. " They whose part is to set up magistrates, may restrain them also from outrageous deeds, or pull them down ; but all magistrates are set up either by parliament or by electors, or by other magistrates ; they, therefore, who exalted them may lawfully degrade and punish them." (33)

(31) "Abdicant se terreni principes," &c.—On Dan. c. vi. v. 22.

(32) "Si princeps superior," &c.—Bucer on Matth. c. v.

(33) "Quorum est constituere magistratus," &c.—Paræus in Rom. xiii.

61. Of the Scots divines I need not mention others than the famousest among them, Knox, and his fellow-labourers in the reformation of Scotland ; whose large treatise on this subject defends the same opinion. To cite them sufficiently, were to insert their whole books, written purposely on this argument. “Knox’s Appeal ;” and to the reader ; where he promises in a postscript, that the book which he intended to set forth, called, “The Second Blast of the Trumpet,” should maintain more at large, that the same men most justly may depose and punish him whom unadvisedly they have elected, notwithstanding birth, succession, or any oath of allegiance. Among our own divines, (³⁴) Cartwright and Fenner, two of the learnedest, may

(³⁴) Hobbes, who hated religion still more, if possible, than he did liberty, observes that this “seditious doctrine” found several advocates among the doctors of the church. Treating of the internal causes which produce the dissolution of governments, he first classes among “seditious opinions,” the notion that private individuals are able to form a just idea of right and wrong : the second political heresy is the belief that subjects may sin in obeying the unjust commands of those in authority ; and the third “*doctrina seditiosa*,” deriving its origin from the same root, is, that *tyrannicide is lawful*. “This opinion, however,” he says, “was defended, in his day, by *certain theologians*, and in old times by all the *sophists*, by Plato, for example, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, and the other Greek and Roman *advocates of anarchy*, who not only thought it lawful, but worthy of the highest praise. And by the word *tyrants* they understood not only monarchs, but whoever held the supreme power in a state.” (*De Cive*, cap. xii. p. 186.) It is not a little amusing to hear the modern Protagoras complimenting the greatest philosophers of antiquity with the appellation which he knew would surely be applied by posterity to himself. Perhaps he regarded

in reason satisfy us what was held by the rest. Fenner, in his book of Theology, maintaining, that they who have power, that is to say, a parliament, may either by fair means or by force depose a tyrant, whom he defines to be him, that wilfully breaks all or the principal conditions made between him and the commonwealth.⁽³⁵⁾ And Cartwright, in a prefixed epistle, testifies his approbation of the whole book.

62. Kings have their authority of the people, who may upon occasion reassume it to themselves."⁽³⁶⁾ "The people may kill wicked princes, as monsters and cruel beasts."⁽³⁷⁾ "When kings or rulers become blasphemers of God, oppressors and murderers of their subjects, they ought no more to be accounted kings or lawful magistrates, but as private men to be examined, accused, and condemned and punished by the law of God, and being convicted and punished by that law, it is

it as a garment which, by being first thrown over the shoulders of virtue and wisdom, might be impregnated with a perfume that would, when he came to wear it, keep his own name from stinking. However, he has here played the *sophist* well, adroitly mixing up truth and falsehood, so that the reader might be compelled to swallow both together. Tyrannicide was indeed considered lawful by the writers above enumerated; but those only were denominated tyrants who *usurped* the supreme power in a state *previously free*; or exercised an inherited authority in an unjust and flagitious manner. "Omnis autem et habentur et dicuntur tyranni qui potestate sunt perpetua *in ea civitate, quæ libertate usa est.*"—(*Corn. Nepos, in Vitâ Miltiad. c. 8.*)

(35) *Fen. Sac. Theolog. c. 13.*

(36) *Gilby de Obedientiâ, p. 25 and 105.*

(37) *England's Complaint against the Canons.*

not man's but God's doing." (38) " By the civil laws, a fool or idiot born, and so proved, shall lose the lands and inheritance whereto he is born, because he is not able to use them aright: and especially ought in no case be suffered to have the government of a whole nation; but there is no such evil can come to the commonwealth by fools and idiots, as doth by the rage and fury of ungodly rulers; such, therefore, being without God, ought to have no authority over God's people, who by his word requireth the contrary." (39) " No person is exempt by any law of God from this punishment: be he king, queen, or emperor, he must die the death; for God hath not placed them above others, to transgress his laws as they list, but to be subject to them as well as others; and if they be subject to his laws, then to the punishment also, so much the more as their example is more dangerous." (40) " When magistrates cease to do their duty, the people are, as it were, without magistrates, yea, worse, and then God giveth the sword into the people's hand, and he himself is become immediately their head." (41) " If princes do right, and keep promise with you, then do you owe to them all humble obedience; if not, ye are discharged, and your study ought to be in this case how ye may depose and punish according to the law such rebels against God, and oppressors of their country." (42)

(38) Christopher Goodman of Obedience, c. x. p. 139.

(39) C. xi. p. 143, 144.

(41) P. 185.

(40) C. xiii. p. 184.

(42) P. 190.

63. This Goodman was a minister of the English church at Geneva, as Dudley Fenner was at Middleburgh, or some other place in that country. These were the pastors of those saints and confessors, who, flying from the bloody persecution of Queen Mary, gathered up at length their scattered members into many congregations; whereof some in upper, some in lower Germany, part of them settled at Geneva; where this author having preached on this subject, to the great liking of certain learned and godly men who heard him, was by them sundry times and with much instance required to write more fully on that point. Who thereupon took it in hand, and conferring with the best learned in those parts, (among whom Calvin was then living in the same city,) with their special approbation he published this treatise, aiming principally, as is testified by Whittingham in the preface, that his brethren of England, the Protestants, might be persuaded in the truth of that doctrine concerning obedience to magistrates. (43)

64. These were the true Protestant divines of England, our fathers in the faith we hold; this was their sense, who for so many years labouring under prelacy, through all storms and persecutions kept religion from extinguishing; and delivered it pure to us, till there arose a covetous and ambitious generation of divines, (for divines they call themselves!) who, feigning on a sudden to be new converts and proselytes from episcopacy, under

(43) Whittingham in Prefat.

which they had long temporised, opened their mouths at length, in show against pluralities and prelacy, but with intent to swallow them down both; gorging themselves like harpies on those simonious places and preferments of their ou ted predecessors, as the quarry for which they hunted, not to plurality only but to multiplicity; for possessing which they had accused them, their brethren, and aspiring under another title to the same authority and usurpation over the consciences of all men.

65. Of this faction, divers reverend and learned divines (as they are styled in the philactery of their own title-page) pleading the lawfulness of defensive arms against the king, in a treatise called “Scripture and Reason,” seem in words to disclaim utterly the deposing of a king; but both the scripture, and the reasons which they use, draw consequences after them, which, without their bidding, conclude it lawful. For if by Scripture, and by that especially to the Romans, which they most insist upon, kings, doing that which is contrary to Saint Paul’s definition of a magistrate, may be resisted, they may altogether with as much force of consequence be deposed or punished. And if by reason the unjust authority of kings “may be forfeited in part, and his power be reassumed in part, either by the parliament or people, for the case in hazard and the present necessity,” as they affirm, p. 34, there can no scripture be alleged, no imaginable reason given, that necessity continuing, as it may always, and they in all pru-

dence and their duty may take upon them to foresee it, why in such a case they may not finally amerce him with the loss of his kingdom, of whose amendment they have no hope. And if one wicked action persisted in against religion, laws, and liberties, may warrant us to thus much in part, why may not forty times as many tyrannies, by him committed, warrant us to proceed on restraining him, till the restraint become total? For the ways of justice are exactest proportion; if for one trespass of a king it require so much remedy or satisfaction, then for twenty more as heinous crimes, it requires of him twenty-fold; and so proportionably, till it come to what is utmost among men. If in these proceedings against their king they may not finish, by the usual course of justice, what they have begun, they could not lawfully begin at all. For this golden rule of justice and morality, as well as of arithmetic, out of three terms which they admit, will as certainly and unavoidably bring out the fourth, as any problem that ever Euclid or Apollonius made good by demonstration.

66. And if the parliament, being undeposable but by themselves, as is affirmed, p. 37, 38, might for his whole life, if they saw cause, take all power, authority, and the sword out of his hand, which in effect is to unmagistrate him, why might they not, being then themselves the sole magistrates in force, proceed to punish him, who, being lawfully deprived of all things that define a magistrate, can be now no magistrate to be degraded lower, but an

offender to be punished. Lastly, whom they may defy, and meet in battle, why may they not as well prosecute by justice? For lawful war is but the execution of justice against them who refuse law. Among whom if it be lawful (as they deny not, p. 19, 20,) to slay the king himself, coming in front at his own peril, wherefore may not justice do that intendedly, which the chance of a defensive war might without blame have done casually, nay, purposely, if there it find him among the rest? They ask, p. 19, "By what rule of conscience or God, a state is bound to sacrifice religion, laws, and liberties, rather than a prince defending such as subvert them, should come in hazard of his life?" And I ask by what conscience, or divinity, or law, or reason, a state is bound to leave all these sacred concerns under a perpetual hazard and extremity of danger, rather than cut off a wicked prince, who sits plotting day and night to subvert them?

67. They tell us, that the law of nature justifies any man to defend himself, even against the king in person: let them show us then, why the same law may not justify much more a state or whole people, to do justice upon him, against whom each private man may lawfully defend himself; seeing all kind of justice done is a defence to good men, as well as a punishment to bad; and justice done upon a tyrant is no more but the necessary self-defence of a whole commonwealth. To war upon a king, that his instruments may be brought to condign punishment, and thereafter to punish

them, the instruments, and not to spare only, but to defend and honour him, the auther, is the strangest piece of justice to be called Christian, and the strangest piece of reason to be called human, that by men of reverence and learning, as their style imports them, ever yet was vented. They maintain, in the third and fourth section, that a judge or inferior magistrate is anointed of God, is his minister, hath the sword in his hand, is to be obeyed by St. Peter's rule, as well as the supreme, and without difference anywhere expressed: and yet will have us fight against the supreme till he remove and punish the inferior magistrate; (for such were greatest delinquents;) wheras, by Scripture and by reason, there can no more authority be shown to resist the one than the other; and altogether as much, to punish or depose the supreme himself, as to make war upon him, till he punish or deliver up his inferior magistrates, whom in the same terms we are commanded to obey, and not to resist.

68. Thus while they, in a cautious line or two here and there stuffed in, are only verbal against the pulling down or punishing of tyrants, all the Scripture and the reason, which they bring, is in every leaf direct and rational, to infer it altogether as lawful, as to resist them. And yet in all their sermons, as hath by others been well noted, they went much further. For divines, if we observe them, have their postures, and their motions no less expertly, and with no less variety, than they that practise feats in the artillery-ground. Some-

times they seem furiously to march on, and presently march counter; by and by they stand, and then retreat; or if need be can face about, or wheel in a whole body, with that cunning and dexterity as is almost unperceivable; to wind themselves by shifting ground into places of more advantage. And providence only must be the drum, providence the word of command, that calls them from above, but always to some larger benefice, or acts them into such or such figures and promotions. At their turns and doublings no men readier, to the right, or to the left; for it is their turns which they serve chiefly; herein only singular, that with them there is no certain hand right or left, but as their own commodity thinks best to call it. But if there come a truth to be defended, which to them and their interest of this world seems not so profitable, straight these nimble motionists can find no even legs to stand upon; and are no more of use to reformation thoroughly performed, and not superficially, or to the advancement of truth, (which among mortal men is always in her progress,) than if on a sudden they were struck maim and crippled. Which the better to conceal, or the more to countenance by a general conformity to their own limping, they would have Scripture, they would have reason also made to halt with them for company; and would put us off with impotent conclusions, lame and shorter than the premises.

69. In this posture they seem to stand with great zeal and confidence on the wall of Sion; but

like Jebusites, not like Israelites, or Levites : blind also as well as lame, they discern not David from Adonibezec : but cry him up for the Lord's anointed, whose thumbs and great toes not long before they had cut off upon their pulpit cushions. Therefore he who is our only king, the root of David, and whose kingdom is eternal righteousness, with all those that war under him, whose happiness and final hopes are laid up in that only just and righteous kingdom, (which we pray incessantly may come soon, and in so praying wish hasty ruin and destruction to all tyrants,) even he, our immortal King, and all that love him, must of necessity have in abomination these blind and lame defenders of Jerusalem ; as the soul of David hated them, and forbid them entrance into God's house, and his own. But as to those before them, which I cited first (and with an easy search, for many more might be added) as they there stand, without more in number, being the best and chief of Protestant divines, we may follow them for faithful guides, and without doubting may receive them, as witnesses abundant of what we here affirm concerning tyrants. And indeed I find it generally the clear and positive determination of them all, (not prelatical, or of this late faction subprelatical,) who have written on this argument; that to do justice on a lawless king, is to a private man unlawful ; to an inferior magistrate lawful ; or if they were divided in opinion, yet greater than these here alleged, or of more authority in the church, there can be none produced.

70. If any one shall go about, by bringing other testimonies, to disable these, or by bringing these against themselves in other cited passages of their books, he will not only fail to make good that false and impudent assertion of those mutinous ministers, that the deposing and punishing of a king or tyrant “is against the constant judgment of all Protestant divines,” it being quite the contrary ; but will prove rather what perhaps he intended not, that the judgment of divines, if it be so various and inconstant to itself, is not considerable, or to be esteemed at all. Ere which be yielded, as I hope it never will, these ignorant assertors in their own art will have proved themselves more and more, not to be Protestant divines, whose constant judgment in this point they have so audaciously belied, but rather to be a pack of hungry church-wolves, who, in the steps of Simon Magus their father, following the hot scent of double livings and pluralities, advowsons, donatives, inductions, and augmentations, though uncalled to the flock of Christ, but by the mere suggestion of their bellies, like those priests of Bel, whose pranks Daniel found out ; have got possession, or rather seized upon the pulpit, as the strong hold and fortress of their sedition and rebellion against the civil magistrate. Whose friendly and victorious hand having rescued them from the bishops, their insulting lords, fed them plenteously, both in public and in private, raised them to be high and rich of poor and base; only suffered not their covetous-

ness and fierce ambition (which as the pit that sent out their fellow-locusts hath been ever bottomless and boundless) to interpose in all things, and over all persons, their impetuous ignorance and importunity.

NOTE.—After what has been said both in the Preliminary Discourse and in the notes to this treatise, it may be scarcely necessary to repeat that the reasonings of Milton are directed only against a wicked tyrant, in a despotic state. The Stuarts, rejecting the principles of the British Constitution, sought to reduce the people of these realms to an equality with the serfs of Russia; and accordingly, in 1688, the measure of their iniquity being full, they were driven from the throne, and our present free constitution established. Since that glorious period, which has placed Great Britain at the head of the civilized world, this work of Milton must be regarded as a mere historical curiosity, which, among ourselves,—where constitutionally “the King can do no wrong,”—could by no possibility, any more than my own remarks on this or upon the other Treatises, have any application to the existing state of things.—For this reason men of all parties have from time to time brought it before the public, as an example of the manner in which its author’s powerful intellect grappled with the question discussed therein; and however the reader may dissent from his conclusions, he will not deny that, as a literary composition,—for in this light only ought it now to be considered,—it is deserving of high commendation. Not having had the happiness to live to taste of the constitutional freedom we enjoy, Milton had always in view the opposing of absolute monarchy, or mere despotism; he had had no experience of any other. To lawful constitutional princes he constantly teaches that all obedience and honour are due; and therefore, making the necessary allowance for the state of excitement in which he wrote, and the angry adversaries he contended with, he may, though sometimes intemperate, be read, not only without injury, but with much advantage, at the distance we are now placed from his stormy times.

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